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B R I T I S H P O E T S.

V O L. XXVII.

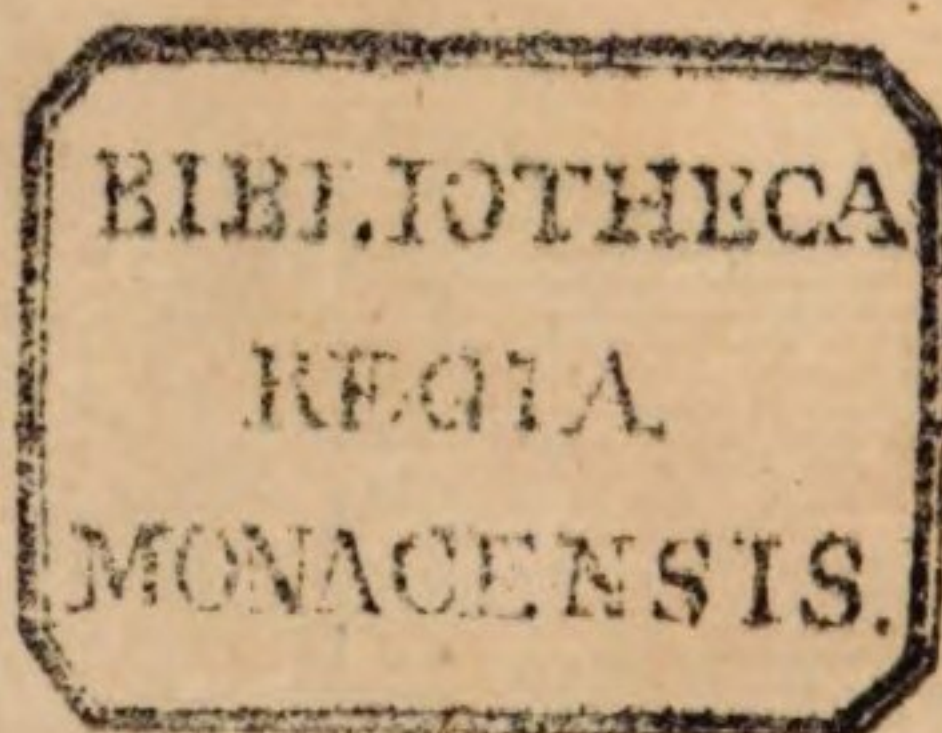
E D I N B U R G H:

Printed for A. KINCAID and W. CREECH,
and J. BALFOUR.

M, DCC, LXXIII.

T H E

A. Lang
BRITISH POETS.



V O L. XXVII

E D I N B U R G H

Printed for A. Kincaid and W. Creech
and J. Ballantyne.

M, DCC, LXXIII

THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK BY

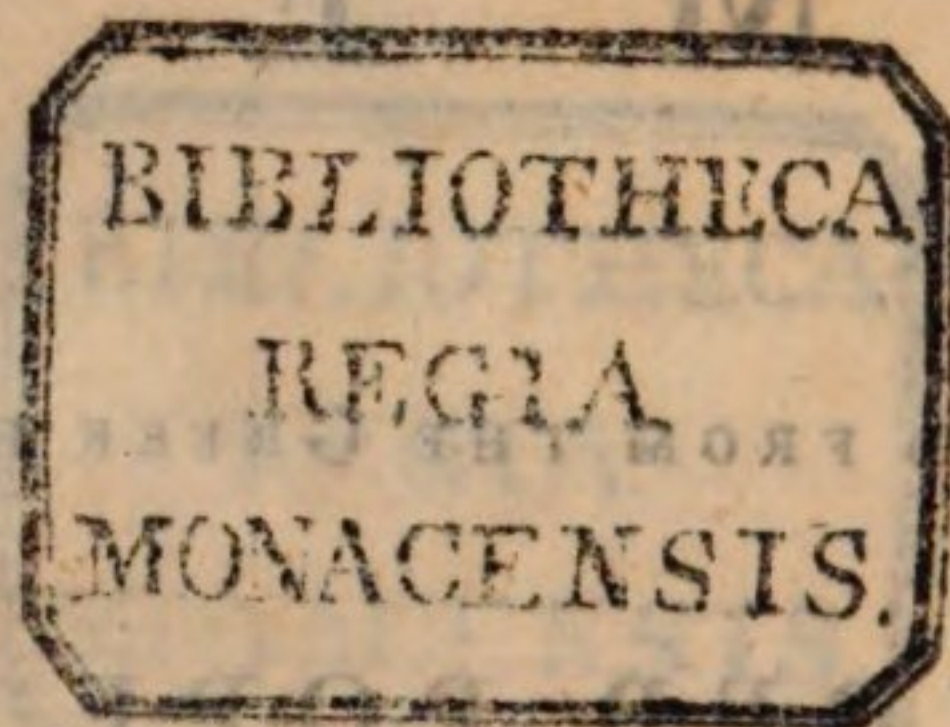
ALEXANDER POPE, Esq;

VOLUME II.

EDINBURGH:

Printed for A. KINCAID and W. CREECH;
and J. BALFOUR.

M, DCC, LXXIII.



M. DCC. LXXII

and J. Balfour.

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REGIA

BIBLIOTHECA

THE
ODYSSEY.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The adventures of the Cicons, Lotophagi, and Cyclops.

ULYSSES begins the relation of his adventures; how, after the destruction of Troy, he, with his companions, made an incursion on the Cicons, by whom they were repulsed; and, meeting with a storm, were driven to the coast of the Lotophagi. From thence they sailed to the land of the Cyclops, whose manners and situation are particularly characterised. The giant Polyphemus and his cave described; the usage Ulysses and his companions met with there; and, lastly, the method and artifice by which he escaped.

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ODYSSEY

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and, lastly, the method and stratagem by which he
escaped.

B O O K IX.

THEN thus Ulysses. Thou, whom first in sway,
As first in virtue, these thy realms obey ;
How sweet the products of a peaceful reign !
The heav'n-taught poet, and enchanting strain ;
The well-fill'd palace, the perpetual feast,
A land rejoicing, and a people blest !
How goodly seems it, ever to employ
Man's social days in union and in joy ;
The plenteous board high-heap'd with cates divine,
And o'er the foaming bowl the laughing wine !

Amid these joys, why seeks thy mind to know
Th' unhappy series of a wand'rer's wo ?
Remembrance sad ! whose image to review,
Alas ! must open all my wounds anew.
And oh ! what first, what last shall I relate,
Of woes unnumber'd, sent by heav'n and fate ?

Know first the man (tho' now a wretch distressed)
Who hopes thee, monarch ! for his future guest.
Behold Ulysses ! no ignoble name ;
Earth sounds my wisdom, and high heav'n my fame.

My native soil is Ithaca the fair,
Where high Neritus waves his woods in air :
Dulichium, Same, and Zacynthus crown'd
With shady mountains, spread their isles around.
(These to the north and night's dark regions run,
Those to Aurora and the rising sun).
Low lies our isle, yet blest'd in fruitful stores ;
Strong are her sons, though rocky are her shores ;

And none, ah none so lovely to my sight,
 Of all the lands that heav'n o'erspreads with light!
 In vain Calypso long constrain'd my stay,
 With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay;
 With all her charms as vainly Circe strove,
 And added magic, to secure my love.
 In pomps or joys, the palace or the grot,
 My country's image never was forgot,
 My absent parents rose before my sight,
 And distant lay contentment and delight.

Hear then the woes which mighty Jove ordain'd
 To wait my passage from the Trojan land.
 The winds from Ilion to the Cicon's shore,
 Beneath cold Ismarus, our vessels bore.
 We boldly landed on the hostile place,
 And sack'd the city, and destroy'd the race,
 Their wives made captive, their possessions shar'd,
 And ev'ry soldier found a like reward.
 I then advis'd to fly; not so the rest,
 Who staid to revel, and prolong the feast:
 The fatted sheep and fable bulls they slay,
 And bowls flow round, and riot wastes the day.
 Meantime the Cicons, to their holds retir'd,
 Call on the Cicons, with new fury fir'd;
 With early morn the gather'd country swarms,
 And all the continent is bright with arms;
 Thick as the budding leaves or rising flow'rs
 O'erspread the lawn, when spring descends in show'rs:
 All expert soldiers, skill'd on foot to dare,
 Or from the bounding courser urge the war.
 Now fortune changes, (so the fates ordain);
 Our hour was come to taste our share of pain.

Close at the ships the bloody fight began,
 Wounded they wound, and man expires on man.
 Long as the morning-sun increasing bright
 O'er heav'n's pure azure spread the growing light,
 Promiscuous death the form of war confounds,
 Each adverse battle gor'd with equal wounds :
 But when his ev'ning wheels o'erhung the main,
 Then conquest crown'd the fierce Ciconian train.
 Six brave companions from each ship we lost,
 The rest escape in haste, and quit the coast.
 With sails outspread we fly th' unequal strife,
 Sad for their loss, but joyful of our life.
 Yet as we fled, our fellows rites we paid,
 And thrice we call'd on each unhappy shade.

Meanwhile the god, whose hand the thunder forms,
 Drives clouds on clouds, and blackens heav'n with
 storms :

Wide o'er the waste the rage of Boreas sweeps,
 And night rush'd headlong on the shaded deeps.
 Now here, now there, the giddy ships are born,
 And all the rattling shrouds in fragments torn.
 We furl'd the sail, we ply'd the lab'ring oar,
 Took down our masts, and row'd our ships to shore.
 Two tedious days and two long nights we lay,
 O'erwatch'd and batter'd in the naked bay.
 But the third morning when Aurora brings,
 We rear the masts, we spread the canvas wings :
 Refresh'd, and careless on the deck reclin'd,
 We sit, and trust the pilot and the wind.
 Then to my native country had I sail'd ;
 But, the cape doubled, adverse winds prevail'd.

Strong was the tide, which, by the northern blast
 Impell'd, our vessels on Cythera cast.
 Nine days our fleet th' uncertain tempest bore
 Far in wide ocean, and from sight of shore :
 The tenth we touch'd, by various errors tost,
 The land of Lotos, and the flow'ry coast.
 We climb'd the beach, and springs of water found,
 Then spread our hasty banquet on the ground.
 Three men were sent, deputed from the crew,
 (An herald one), the dubious coast to view,
 And learn what habitants possess'd the place.
 They went, and found a hospitable race ;
 Not prone to ill, nor strange to foreign guest,
 They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feast ;
 The trees around them all their fruit produce,
 Lotos, the name ; divine, nectareous juice !
 (Thence call'd Lotophagi) ; which who so tastes,
 Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts,
 Nor other home nor other care intends,
 But quits his house, his country, and his friends.
 The three we sent, from off th' enchanting ground
 We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound :
 The rest in haste forsook the pleasing shore,
 Or, the charm tasted, had return'd no more.
 Now plac'd in order on their banks, they sweep
 The sea's smooth face, and cleave the hoary deep ;
 With heavy hearts we labour through the tide,
 To coasts unknown, and oceans yet untry'd.
 The land of Cyclops first : a savage kind,
 Nor tam'd by manners, nor by laws confin'd :
 Untaught to plant, to turn the glebe, and sow,
 They all their products to free nature owe.

The soil untill'd a ready harvest yields,
 With wheat and barley wave the golden fields,
 Spontaneous wines from weighty clusters pour,
 And Jove descends in each prolific show'r.
 By these no statutes and no rights are known,
 No council held, no monarch fills the throne;
 But high on hills or airy cliffs they dwell,
 Or deep in caves whose entrance leads to hell.
 Each rules his race, his neighbour not his care,
 Heedless of others, to his own severe.

Oppos'd to the Cyclopean coasts, there lay
 An isle, whose hills their subject fields survey;
 Its name Lachaea, crown'd with many a grove,
 Where savage goats thro' pathless thickets rove:
 No needy mortals here, with hunger bold,
 Or wretched hunters, through the wint'ry cold
 Pursue their flight, but leave them safe to bound
 From hill to hill, o'er all the desert ground.
 Nor knows the soil to feed the fleecy care,
 Or feels the labours of the crooked share;
 But uninhabited, untill'd, unsown
 It lies, and breeds the bleating goat alone.
 For there no vessel with vermilion prore,
 Or bark of traffic, glides from shore to shore;
 The rugged race of savages, unskill'd
 The seas to traverse, or the ships to build,
 Gaze on the coast, nor cultivate the soil;
 Unlearn'd in all th' industrious arts of toil.
 Yet here all products and all plants abound,
 Sprung from the fruitful genius of the ground;
 Fields waving high with heavy crops are seen,
 And vines that flourish in eternal green,

Refreshing meads along the murm'ring main,
And fountains streaming down the fruitful plain.

A port there is, inclos'd on either side,
Where ships may rest, unanchor'd and unty'd;
Till the glad mariners incline to sail,
And the sea whitens with the rising gale,
High at its head, from out the cavern'd rock
In living rills a gushing fountain broke:
Around it, and above, for ever green
The bushing alders form'd a shady scene.
Hither some fav'ring god, beyond our thought,
Through all-surrounding shade our navy brought;
For gloomy night descended on the main,
Nor glimmer'd Phoebe in th' aetherial plain:
But all unseen the clouded island lay,
And all unseen the surge and rolling sea,
Till safe we anchor'd in the shelter'd bay:
Our sails we gather'd, cast our cables o'er,
And slept secure along the sandy shore.
Soon as again the rosy morning shone,
Reveal'd the landscape and the scene unknown,
With wonder seiz'd we view the pleasing ground,
And walk delighted, and expatiate round.
Rous'd by the woodland-nymphs, at early dawn
The mountain-goats came bounding o'er the lawn:
In haste our fellows to the ships repair,
For arms and weapons of the sylvan war;
Straight in three squadrons all our crew we part,
And bend the bow, or wing the missile dart;
The bounteous gods afford a copious prey,
And nine fat goats each vessel bears away:

The royal bark had ten. Our ships complete
We thus supply'd, (for twelve were all the fleet.)

Here, till the setting-sun roll'd down the light,
We sat indulging in the genial rite.
Nor wines were wanting: Those from ample jars
We drain'd, the prize of our Ciconian wars.

The land of Cyclops lay in prospect near;
The voice of goats and bleating flocks we hear,
And from their mountains rising smokes appear.

Now sunk the sun, and darkness cover'd o'er
The face of things: Along the sea-beat shore
Sate we slept: But when the sacred dawn
Arising glitter'd o'er the dewy lawn,
I call'd my fellows, and these words address'd.

My dear associates, here indulge your rest;
While, with my single ship, advent'rous I
Go forth, the manners of yon men to try;
Whether a race unjust, of barb'rous might,
Rude, and unconscious of a stranger's right;
Or such who harbour pity in their breast,
Revere the gods, and succour the distressed?

This said, I climb'd my vessel's lofty side;
My train obey'd me, and the ship unty'd.
In order seated on their banks, they sweep
Neptune's smooth face, and cleave the yielding deep.
When to the nearest verge of land we drew,
Fast by the sea a lonely cave we view,
High, and with dark'ning laurels cover'd o'er,
Where sheep and goats lay slumb'ring round the shore.
Near this, a fence of marble from the rock,
Brown with o'er-arching pine, and spreading oak.

A giant-shepherd here his flock maintains
 Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
 In shelter thick of horrid shade reclin'd;
 And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind.
 A form enormous! far unlike the race
 Of human birth, in stature, or in face:
 As some lone mountain's monstrous growth he stood,
 Crown'd with rough thickets, and a nodding wood.
 I left my vessel at the point of land,
 And close to guard it gave the crew command:
 With only twelve, the boldest and the best,
 I seek th' adventure, and forsake the rest.
 Then took a goatskin fill'd with precious wine,
 The gift of Maron, of Evantheus' line,
 (The priest of Phoebus at th' Ismarian shrine.)
 In sacred shade his honour'd mansion stood,
 Amidst Apollo's consecrated wood:
 Him, and his house, heav'n mov'd my mind to save,
 And costly presents in return he gave;
 Sev'n golden talents to perfection wrought,
 A silver bowl that held a copious draught,
 And twelve large vessels of unmingled wine,
 Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine!
 Which now some ages from his race conceal'd,
 The hoary sire in gratitude reveal'd.
 Such was the wine; to quench whose fervent stream,
 Scarce twenty measures from the living stream
 To cool one cup suffic'd: The goblet crown'd
 Breath'd aromatic fragrances around.
 Of this an ample vase we heav'd aboard,
 And brought another with provisions stor'd.

My soul foreboded I should find the bow'r
 Of some fell monster, fierce with barb'rous pow'r,
 Some rustic wretch, who liv'd in heav'n's despite,
 Contemning laws, and trampling on the right.
 The cave we found, but vacant all within,
 (His flock the giant tended on the green).
 But round the grot we gaze; and all we view,
 In order rang'd, our admiration drew:
 The bending shelves with loads of cheeses prest,
 The folded flocks each sep'rate from the rest,
 (The larger here, and there the lesser lambs,
 The new-fall'n young here bleating for their dams;
 The kid distinguish'd from the lambkin lies):
 The cavern echoes with responsive cries.
 Capacious chargers all around were laid,
 Full pails, and vessels of the milking trade.
 With fresh provisions hence our fleet to store
 My friends advise me, and to quit the shore;
 Or drive a flock of sheep and goats away,
 Consult our safety, and put off to sea.
 Their wholesome counsel rashly I declin'd,
 Curious to view the man of monstrous kind,
 And try what social rites a savage lends:
 Dire rites, alas! and fatal to my friends!

Then first a fire we kindle, and prepare,
 For his return, with sacrifice and pray'r.
 The loaden shelves afford us full repast.
 We sit expecting. Lo! he comes at last.
 Near half a forest on his back he bore,
 And cast the pond'rous burden at the door.
 It thunder'd as it fell. We trembled then,
 And sought the deep recesses of the den.

Now driv'n before him, through the arching rock,
 Came tumbling, heaps on heaps, th' unnumber'd flock:
 Big-udder'd ewes, and goats of female kind,
 (The males were penn'd in outward courts behind).
 Then, heav'd on high, a rock's enormous weight
 To the cave's mouth he roll'd, and clos'd the gate;
 (Scarce twenty four-wheel'd cars, compact and strong,
 The massy load could bear, or roll along.)
 He next betakes him to his ev'ning cares,
 And, sitting down, to milk his flocks prepares;
 Of half their udders eases first the dams,
 Then to the mother's teat submits the lambs.
 Half the white stream to hard'ning cheese he prest,
 And high in wicker baskets heap'd; the rest,
 Reserv'd in bowls, supply'd his nightly feast.
 His labour done, he fir'd the pile, that gave
 A sudden blaze, and lighten'd all the cave.
 We stand discover'd by the rising fires;
 Askance the giant glares, and thus inquires.

What are ye, guests? on what adventure, say,
 Thus far ye wander through the wat'ry way?
 Pirates, perhaps, who seek, through seas unknown,
 The lives of others, and expose your own?

His voice like thunder through the cavern sounds:
 My bold companions thrilling fear confounds,
 Appall'd at sight of more than mortal man!
 At length, with heart recover'd, I began.

From Troy's fam'd fields, sad wand'ers o'er the
 main,
 Behold the reliques of the Grecian train!
 Through various seas, by various perils tost,
 And forc'd by storms, unwilling, on your coast,

Far from our destin'd course, and native land :
 Such was our fate, and such high Jove's command !
 Nor what we are, befits us to disclaim,
 Atrides' friends, (in arms a mighty name),
 Who taught proud Troy and all her sons to bow ;
 Victors of late, but humble suppliants now !
 Low at thy knee thy succour we implore ;
 Respect us, human ; and relieve us, poor.
 At least some hospitable gift bestow ;
 'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe :
 'Tis what the gods require : Those gods revere,
 The poor and stranger are their constant care :
 To Jove their cause, and their revenge belongs ;
 He wanders with them, and he feels their wrongs.

Fools that ye are ! (the savage thus replies,
 His inward fury blazing at his eyes),
 Or strangers, distant far from our abodes,
 To bid me rev'rence or regard the gods.
 Know then we Cyclops are, a race above
 Those air-bred people, and their goat-nurs'd Jove :
 And learn, our pow'r proceeds with thee and thine,
 Not as he wills, but as ourselves incline.
 But answer, the good ship that brought ye o'er,
 Where lies she anchor'd ? near or off the shore ?

Thus he. His meditated fraud I find,
 (Vers'd in the turns of various human kind),
 And cautious, thus : Against a dreadful rock,
 Fast by your shore the gallant vessel broke,
 Scarce with these few I 'scap'd, of all my train,
 Whom angry Neptune whelm'd beneath the main ;
 The scatter'd wreck the winds blew back again. }

He answer'd with his deed. His bloody hand
 Snatch'd two, unhappy ! of my martial band,
 And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor :
 The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.
 Torn limb from limb, he spreads his horrid feast,
 And fierce devours it like a mountain-beast :
 He sucks the marrow, and the blood he drains !
 Nor entrails, flesh, nor solid bone remains.
 We see the death from which we cannot move,
 And humbled groan beneath the hand of Jove.
 His ample maw with human carnage fill'd,
 A milky deluge next the giant swill'd ;
 Then stretch'd in length o'er half the cavern'd rock,
 Lay senseless and supine, amidst the flock.
 To seize the time, and with a sudden wound
 To fix the slumb'ring monster to the ground,
 My soul impels me ; and in act I stand
 To draw the sword ; but wisdom held my hand.
 A deed so rash had finish'd all our fate,
 No mortal forces from the lofty gate
 Could roll the rock. In hopeless grief we lay,
 And sigh, expecting the return of day.

Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,
 And shed her sacred light along the skies.
 He wakes, he lights the fire, he milks the dams,
 And to the mother's teats submits the lambs.
 Next ask thus finish'd of his morning-hours,
 Two more he snatches, murders, and devours.
 Then pleas'd and whistling, drives his flocks before ;
 Removes the rocky mountain from the door,
 And shuts again ; with equal ease dispos'd,
 As a light quiver's lid is op'd and clos'd.

His giant-voice the echoing region fills :
His flocks, obedient, spread o'er all the hills.

Thus left behind e'en in the last despair
I thought, devis'd, and Pallas heard my pray'r.
Revenge, and doubt, and caution work'd my breast ;
But this of many counsels seem'd the best :

The monster's club within the cave I spy'd,
A tree of stateliest growth, and yet undry'd,
Green from the wood ; of height and bulk so vast,
The largest ship might claim it for a mast.

This shorten'd of its top, I gave my train
A fathom's length, to shape it and to plain ;
The narrow'r end I sharpen'd to a spire ;
Whole point we harden'd with the force of fire,
And hid it in the dust that strow'd the cave.

'Then to my few companions, bold and brave,
Propos'd, who first the vent'rous deed should try,
In the broad orbit of his monstrous eye

To plunge the brand, and twirl the pointed wood,
When slumber next should tame the man of blood :
Just as I wish'd, the lots were cast on four :

Myself the fifth. We stand and wait the hour.]

He comes with ev'ning : All his fleecy flock
Before him march, and pour into the rock :

Not one, or male or female, staid behind :
(So fortune chanc'd, or so some god design'd.)

Then heaving high the stone's unwieldy weight,
He roll'd it on the cave, and clos'd the gate.

First down he sits to milk the woolly dams
And then permits their udder to the lambs.

Next seiz'd two wretches more, and headlong cast,
Brain'd on the rock ; his second dire repast.

I then approach'd him, reeking with their gore,
 And held the brimming goblet foaming o'er :
 Cyclop ! since human flesh has been thy feast,
 Now drain this goblet, potent to digest :
 Know hence what treasures in our ship we lost,
 And what rich liquors other climates boast.
 We to thy shore the precious freight shall bear,
 If home thou send us, and vouchsafe to spare.
 But oh ! thus furious, thirsting thus for gore,
 The sons of men shall ne'er approach thy shore,
 And never shalt thou taste this nectar more. }

He heard, he took, and pouring down his throat
 Delighted, swill'd the large luxurious draught.
 More ! give me more, he cry'd : The boon be thine,
 Whoe'er thou art, that bear'st celestial wine !
 Declare thy name ; not mortal is this juice,
 Such as th' unblest'd Cyclopean climes produce,
 (Though sure our vine the largest cluster yields,
 And Jove's scorn'd thunder serves to drench our fields) ;
 But this descended from the best abodes,
 A rill of nectar, streaming from the gods.

He said, and greedy grasp'd the heady bowl,
 Thrice drain'd, and pour'd the deluge on his soul.
 His sense lay cover'd with the dasy fume ;
 While thus my fraudulent speech I reassume.
 Thy promis'd boon, O Cyclop ! now I claim,
 And plead my title : Noman is my name.
 By that distinguish'd from my tender years,
 'Tis what my parents call me, and my peers.

The giant then : Our promis'd grace receive,
 The hospitable boon we mean to give :

When all thy wretched crew have felt my pow'r,
Noman shall be the last I will devour.

He said : Then nodding with the fumes of wine,
Dropt his huge head, and snoring lay supine.
His neck obliquely o'er his shoulder hung,
Press'd with the weight of sleep, that tames the strong;
There belch'd the mingled streams of wine and blood,
And human flesh, his indigested food.
Sudden I stir the embers, and inspire
With animating breath the seeds of fire ;
Each drooping spirit with bold words repair,
And urge my train the dreadful deed to dare.
The stake now glow'd beneath the burning bed,
(Green as it was), and sparkled fiery red.
Then forth the vengeful instrument I bring ;
With beating hearts my fellows form a ring.
Urg'd by some present god, they swift let fall
The pointed torment on his visual ball.
Myself above them, from a rising ground
Guide the sharp stake, and twirl it round and round.
As when a shipwright stands his workmen o'er,
Who ply the wimble, some huge beam to bore ;
Urg'd on all hands, it nimbly spins about,
The grain deep-piercing till it scoops it out ;
In his broad eye so whirls the fiery wood ;
From the pierc'd pupil spouts the boiling blood ;
Sing'd are his brows ; the scorching lids grow black ;
The gelly bubbles, and the fibres crack.
And as when arm'ers temper in the ford
The keen-edg'd pole-ax, or the shining sword,
The red hot metal hisses in the lake,
Thus in his eyeball hiss'd the plunging stake.

He sends a dreadful groan : The rocks around
 Through all their inmost winding caves resound.
 Scar'd, we receded. Forth, with frantic hand,
 He tore, and dash'd on earth the goary brand :
 Then calls the Cyclops, all that round him dwell,
 With voice like thunder, and a direful yell.
 From all their dens the one-ey'd race repair,
 From rifted rocks, and mountains bleak in air,
 All haste assembled, at his well-known roar,
 Inquire the cause, and croud the cavern-door.

What hurts thee, Polypheme ? what strange affright
 Thus breaks our slumbers, and disturbs the night ?
 Does any mortal, in th' unguarded hour
 Of sleep, oppress thee, or by fraud or pow'r ?
 Or thieves insidious thy fair flock surprise ?
 Thus they. The Cyclop from his den replies.

Friends, Noman kills me : Noman, in the hour
 Of sleep, oppresses me with fraudulent pow'r.

“ If *No man* hurt thee, but the hand divine

“ Inflict disease, it fits thee to resign :

“ To Jove, or to thy father Neptune pray,”

The brethren cry'd, and instant strode away.

Joy touch'd my secret soul, and conscious heart,
 Pleas'd with th' effect of conduct and of art.

Meantime the Cyclop, raging with his wound,
 Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and round :

At last, the stone removing from the gate,

With hands extended in the midst he sat ;

And search'd each passing sheep, and felt it o'er ;

Secure to seize us ere we reach'd the door.

(Such as his shallow wit, he deem'd was mine),

But secret I revolv'd the deep design ;

'Twas for our lives my lab'ring bosom wrought;
 Each scheme I turn'd, and sharpen'd ev'ry thought:
 This way and that, I cast to save my friends,
 Till one resolve my varying counsel ends.

Strong were the rams, with native purple fair,
 Well fed, and largest of the fleecy care.

These, three and three, with osier bands we ty'd,
 (The twining bands the Cyclop's bed supply'd);
 The midmost bore a man; the outward two
 Secur'd each side: So bound we all the crew.

One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock;
 In his deep fleece my grasping hands I lock,
 And fast beneath, in woolly curls inwove,
 There cling implicit, and confide in Jove.

When rosy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales,
 He drove to pasture all the lusty males:

The ewes still folded, with distended thighs
 Unmilk'd, lay bleating in distressful cries.
 But heedless of those cares, with anguish stung,
 He felt their fleeces as they pass'd along,
 (Fool that he was) and let them safely go,
 All unsuspecting of their freight below.

The master ram at last approach'd the gate,
 Charg'd with his wool, and with Ulysses' fate.
 Him while he pass'd, the monster blind bespoke:
 What makes my ram the lag of all the flock?
 First thou wert wont to crop the flow'ry mead,
 First to the field and river's bank to lead,
 And first with stately step at ev'ning hour
 Thy fleecy fellows usher to their bow'r.
 Now far the last, with pensive pace and slow
 Thou mov'st, as conscious of thy master's wo!

Seest thou these lids that now unfold in vain ?
 (The deed of Noman and his wicked train).
 Oh ! didst thou feel for thy afflicted lord,
 And would but fate the pow'r of speech afford ;
 Soon mightst thou tell me, where in secret here
 The dastard lurks, all trembling with his fear.
 Swung round and round, and dash'd from rock to rock,
 His batter'd brains should on the pavement smoke.
 No ease, no pleasure my sad heart receives,
 While such a monster as vile Noman lives.

The giant spoke, and thro' the hollow rock
 Dismiss'd the ram, the father of the flock.
 No sooner freed, and thro' th' inclosure past,
 First I release myself, my fellows last :
 Fat sheep and goats in throngs we drive before,
 And reach our vessel on the winding shore.
 With joy the sailors view their friends return'd,
 And hail as living, whom as dead they mourn'd.
 Big tears of transport stand in ev'ry eye :
 I check their fondness, and command to fly.
 Aboard in haste they heave the wealthy sheep,
 And snatch their oars, and rush into the deep.

Now off at sea, and from the shallows clear,
 As far as human voice could reach the ear ;
 With taunts the distant giant I accost,
 Hear me, oh Cyclop ! hear, ungracious host !
 'Twas on no coward, no ignoble slave,
 Thou meditat'st thy meal in yonder cave ;
 But one, the vengeance fated from above
 Doom'd to inflict ; the instrument of Jove.
 Thy barb'rous breach of hospitable bands,
 The god, the god revenges by my hands.

These words the Cyclop's burning rage provoke :
 From the tall hill he rends a pointed rock ;
 High o'er the billows flew the massy load,
 And near the ship came thund'ring on the flood.
 It almost brush'd the helm, and fell before :
 The whole sea shook, and reflux beat the shore.
 The strong concussion on the heaving tide
 Roll'd back the vessel to the island's side :
 Again I shov'd her off; our fate to fly,
 Each nerve we stretch, and ev'ry oar we ply.
 Just 'scap'd impending death, when now again
 We twice as far had furrow'd back the main,
 Once more I raise my voice; my friends afraid
 With mild entreaties my design dissuade.
 What boots the godless giant to provoke,
 Whose arm may sink us at a single stroke ?
 Already, when the dreadful rock he threw,
 Old Ocean shook, and back his surges flew.
 Thy sounding voice directs his aim again ;
 The rock o'erwhelms us, and we 'scap'd in vain.

But I, of mind elate, and scorning fear,
 Thus with new taunts insult the monster's ear:
 Cyclop ! if any, pitying thy disgrace,
 Ask who disfigur'd thus that eyeless face ?
 Say 'twas Ulysses ; 'twas his deed, declare,
 Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair ;
 Ulysses, far in fighting fields renown'd,
 Before whose arm Troy tumbled to the ground.

Th' astonish'd savage with a roar replies.
 Oh heav'ns ! oh faith of ancient prophecies !
 This, Telemus Eurymides foretold,
 (The mighty seer who on these hills grew old ;

Skill'd the dark fates of mortals to declare,
 And learn'd in all wing'd omens of the air) ;
 Long since he menac'd, such was Fate's command ;
 And nam'd Ulysses as the destin'd hand.
 I deem'd some godlike giant to behold,
 Or lofty hero, haughty, brave, and bold ;
 Not this weak pigmy-wretch, of mean design,
 Who not by strength subdu'd me, but by wine.
 But come, accept our gifts, and join to pray
 Great Neptune's blessing on the wat'ry way :
 For his I am, and I the lineage own :
 Th' immortal father no less boasts the son.
 His pow'r can heal me, and relight my eye ;
 And only his, of all the gods on high.

Oh ! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoin'd)
 From that vast bulk dislodge thy bloody mind,
 And send thee howling to the realms of night,
 As sure, as Neptune cannot give thee fight !

Thus I : While raging he repeats his cries,
 With hands uplifted to the starry skies :
 Hear me, Oh Neptune ! thou whose arms are hurl'd
 From shore to shore, and gird the solid world.
 If thine I am, nor thou my birth disown,
 And if th' unhappy Cyclop be thy son ;
 Let not Ulysses breathe his native air,
 Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair.
 If to review his country be his fate,
 Be it thro' toils and suff'rings, long and late,
 His lost companions let him first deplore ;
 Some vessel, not his own, transport him o'er ;
 And when at home from foreign suff'rings freed,
 More near and deep, domestic woes succeed !

With imprecations thus he fill'd the air,
 And angry Neptune heard th' unrighteous pray'r.
 A larger rock then heaving from the plain,
 He whirl'd it round : It sung across the main :
 It fell, and brush'd the stern : The billows roar,
 Shake at the weight, and reflux beat the shore.
 With all our force we kept aloof to sea,
 And gain'd the island where our vessels lay.
 Our sight the whole collected navy cheer'd,
 Who, waiting long, by turns had hop'd and fear'd.
 There disembarking on the green sea-side,
 We land our cattle, and the spoil divide :
 Of these due shares to ev'ry sailor fall ;
 The master ram was voted mine by all :
 And him (the guardian of Ulysses' fate)
 With pious mind to heav'n I consecrate.
 But the great god, whose thunder rends the skies,
 Averse, beholds the smoking sacrifice ;
 And sees me wand'ring still from coast to coast ;
 And all my vessels, all my people, lost !

While thoughtless we indulge the genial rite,
 As plenteous cates and flowing bowls invite ;
 Till evening Phoebus roll'd away the light :
 Stretch'd on the shore in careless ease we rest,
 Till ruddy morning purpled o'er the east.
 Then from their anchors all our ships unbind,
 And mount the decks, and call the willing wind.
 Now rang'd in order on our banks, we sweep
 With hasty strokes the hoarse-resounding deep ;
 Blind to the future, pensive with our fears,
 Glad for the living, for the dead in tears.

With imprecations thus he fill'd the air,
 And angry passions burst in his breast;
 A jagged rock, been hovering from the plain,
 He whirled it round: it rang as it fell;
 It fell, and crush'd the base: The distant town,
 Shook at the weight, and silent was the shore.
 With all our former we kept silent rest;
 And gazed the island where our vessels lay.
 Our light the whole collected navy cheer'd,
 Who, waiting long, by turns had hope and fear;
 There disembarking on the grassy shore,
 We land our cattle, and the spoil divide:
 Of these the harvest every day we reap;
 The matter was restored to us by all;
 And him (the captain of the ship) we
 With pains intend to bring to justice;
 But the great god, whose temple stands the king,
 A voice, hehels the sounding voice;
 And we we wand'ring with our souls to cost;
 And all my vessels, all my people, fell;
 While thoughts we struggle the great god,
 As phantoms, and howling howls in the air;
 The evening light we see the light;
 Search'd on the shore to search the water;
 'Till morn'g morning parted with the night;
 Then from their anchors all our ships unbind;
 And mean the decks and the willing wind;
 Now could we order our course;
 With happy strokes the main we sweep;
 Blind to the danger, and our fate;
 Obed for the living, for the dead in vain;
 And we we wand'ring with our souls to cost;

T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K X.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

Adventures with Æolus, the Lestrigons, and Circe.

ULYSSES arrives at the island of Æolus, who gives him prosperous winds, and incloses the adverse ones in a bag, which his companions untying, they are driven back again, and rejected. Then they sail to the Lestrigons, where they lose eleven ships, and, with one only remaining, proceed to the island of Circe. Eurylochus is sent first with some companions, all which, except Eurylochus, are transformed into swine. Ulysses then undertakes the adventure, and, by the help of Mercury, who gives him the herb Moly, overcomes the enchantress, and procures the restoration of his men. After a year's stay with her, he prepares, at her instigation, for his voyage to the infernal shades.

T N E

O D Y S S E Y

B O O K X.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

Odysseus, with his ship, the *Argo*, and crew,
are driven back to the island of Ithaca, where
they find the king, who gives them
a bag, which he explains to them, and
drives them back again, and rejects them.
Then they sail to the Isthmus, where they lose eleven ships, and
with one only remaining, proceed to the island of
Cora. Eurycleia is sent with some com-
rades, all which, except Eurycleia, are trans-
formed into swine. Ulysses then undertakes the return
to Ithaca, and, by the help of Athena, who gives him
the bow and arrow, overcomes the suitors, and pro-
cures the restoration of his home. After a year's
stay with her, he departs, at her invitation, for
his voyage to the island of Ithaca.

B O O K XI.

AT length we reach'd Æolia's sea-girt shore,
Where great Hippotades the sceptre bore,
A floating isle! High-rais'd by toil divine,
Strong walls of brass the rocky coast confine.
Six blooming youths, in private grandeur bred,
And six fair daughters, grac'd the royal bed :
These sons their sisters wed, and all remain
Their parents pride, and pleasure of their reign.
All day they feast, all day the bowls flow round,
And joy and music thro' the isle resound :
At night each pair on splendid carpets lay,
And crown'd with love the pleasures of the day.

This happy port affords our wand'ring fleet
A month's reception, and a safe retreat.
Full oft the monarch urg'd me to relate
The fall of Ilion, and the Grecian fate;
Full oft I told : At length for parting mov'd;
The king with mighty gifts my suit approv'd.
The adverse winds in leathern bags he brac'd,
Compress'd their force, and lock'd each struggling
blast.

For him the mighty sire of gods assign'd
The tempest's lord, and tyrant of the wind ;
His word alone the list'ning storms obey,
To smoothe the deep, or swell the foamy sea.
These in my hollow ship the monarch hung,
Securely fetter'd by a silver thong ;

But Zephyrus exempt, with friendly gales
 He charg'd to fill, and guide the swelling sails:
 Rare gift! but oh, what gift to fools avails!

Nine prosp'rous days we ply'd the lab'ring oar;
 The tenth presents our welcome native shore:
 The hills display the beacon's friendly light,
 And rising mountains gain upon our sight.
 Then first my eyes, by watchful toils oppress'd,
 Comply'd to take the balmy gifts of rest;
 Then first my hands did from the rudder part,
 (So much the love of home possess'd my heart);
 When lo! on board a fond debate arose;
 What rare device those vessels might inclose?
 What sum, what prize from Æolus I brought?
 Whilst to his neighbour each express'd his thought.

Say, whence, ye gods, contending nations strive
 Who most shall please, who most our hero give?
 Long have his coffers groan'd with Trojan spoils;
 Whilst we, the wretched partners of his toils,
 Reproach'd by want, our fruitless labours mourn,
 And only rich in barren fame return.
 Now Æolus, ye see, augments his store:
 But come, my friends, these mystic gifts explore.
 They said: And (oh curs'd fate!) the thongs unbound;
 The gushing tempest sweeps the ocean round;
 Snatch'd in the whirl, the hurried navy flew,
 The ocean widen'd, and the shores withdrew.
 Rous'd from my fatal sleep, I long debate
 If still to live, or desp'rate plunge to fate:
 Thus doubting, prostrate on the deck I lay,
 Till all the coward thoughts of death gave way.

Meanwhile our vessels plough the liquid plain,
 And soon the known Æolian coast regain.
 Our groans the rocks re-murmur'd to the main.
 We leap'd on shore, and with a scanty feast
 Our thirst and hunger hastily repress;
 That done, two chosen heralds strait attend,
 Our second progress to my royal friend;
 And him amidst his jovial sons we found;
 The banquet steaming, and the goblets crown'd:
 There humbly stopp'd with conscious shame and awe,
 Nor nearer than the gate presum'd to draw.
 But soon his sons their well-known guest descry'd,
 And starting from their couches loudly cry'd,
 Ulysses here! what daemon couldst thou meet
 To thwart thy passage, and repel thy fleet?
 Wast thou not furnish'd by our choicest care
 For Greece, for home, and all thy soul held dear?
 Thus they: In silence long my fate I mourn'd,
 At length these words with accent low return'd.
 Me, lock'd in sleep, my faithless crew bereft
 Of all the blessings of your godlike gift!
 But grant, oh grant our loss we may retrieve:
 A favour you, and you alone can give.

Thus I with art to move their pity try'd,
 And touch'd the youths; but their stern fire reply'd,
 Vile wretch, begone! this instant I command
 Thy fleet accurs'd to leave our hallow'd land.
 His baneful suit pollutes these bless'd abodes,
 Whose fate proclaims him hateful to the gods.
 Thus fierce he said: We fighting went our way,
 And with desponding hearts put off to sea.

The failors, spent with toils, their folly mourn,
 But mourn in vain ; no prospect of return.
 Six days and nights a doubtful course we steer,
 The next proud Lamos' stately tow'rs appear,
 And Laestrigonia's gates arise distinct in air.
 The shepherd quitting here at night the plain,
 Calls, to succeed his cares, the watchful swain ;
 But he that scorns the chains of sleep to wear,
 And adds the herdsman's to the shepherd's care,
 So near the pastures, and so short the way,
 His double toils may claim a double pay,
 And join the labours of the night and day.

Within a long recess a bay there lies,
 Edg'd round with cliffs, high pointing to the skies ;
 'The jutting shores that swell on either side
 Contract its mouth, and break the rushing tide.
 Our eager failors seize the fair retreat,
 And bound within the port their crouded fleet :
 For here retir'd the sinking billows sleep,
 And smiling calmness silver'd o'er the deep.
 I only in the bay refus'd to moor,
 And fix'd, without, my haulsers to the shore:

From thence we climb'd a point, whose airy brow
 Commands the prospect of the plains below :
 No tracks of beasts, or signs of men we found,
 But smoky volumes rolling from the ground,
 Two with our herald thither we command,
 With speed to learn what men possess'd the land.
 They went, and kept the wheel's smooth beaten road
 Which to the city drew the mountain-wood ;
 When lo ! they met, beside a crystal spring,
 The daughter of Antiphates the king ;

She to Artacia's silver streams came down,
 (Artacia's streams alone supply the town):
 The damsel they approach, and ask'd what race
 The people were? who monarch of the place?
 With joy the maid th' unwary strangers heard,
 And show'd them where the royal dome appear'd.
 They went: But, as they ent'ring saw the queen
 Of size enormous, and terrific mien,
 (Not yielding to some bulky mountain's height),
 A sudden horror struck their aking sight.
 Swift at her call her husband scour'd away
 To wreak his hunger on the destin'd prey;
 One for his food the raging glutton flew;
 But two rush'd out, and to the navy flew.

Balk'd of his prey, the yelling monster flies,
 And fills the city with his hideous cries.
 A ghastly band of giants hear the roar,
 And, pouring down the mountains, croud the shore.
 Fragments they rend from off the craggy brow,
 And dash the ruins on the ships below:
 The crackling vessels burst; hoarse groans arise,
 And mingled horrors echo to the skies;
 The men, like fish, they stuck upon the flood,
 And cramm'd their filthy throats with human food.
 Whilst thus their fury rages at the bay,
 My sword our cables cut; I call'd to weigh;
 And charg'd my men, as they from fate would fly,
 Each nerve to strain, each bending oar to ply.
 The sailors catch the word, their oars they seize,
 And sweep with equal strokes the smoky seas.
 Clear of the rocks th' impatient vessel flies;
 Whilst in the port each wretch incumber'd dies.

With earnest haste my frightened sailors press,
 While kindling transports glow'd at our success;
 But the sad fate that did our friends destroy
 Cool'd ev'ry breast, and damp'd the rising joy.

Now dropp'd our anchors in the *Ææan* bay,
 Where *Circe* dwelt, the daughter of the day;
 Her mother *Perse*, of old *Ocean's* strain,
 Thus from the Sun descended, and the Main;
 (From the same lineage stern *Ææetes* came,
 The far-fam'd brother of th' enchantress dame),
 Goddess and queen, to whom the pow'rs belong
 Of dreadful magic, and commanding song.
 Some god directing, to this peaceful bay
 Silent we came, and melancholy lay,
 Spent and o'erwatch'd. Two days and nights roll'd on,
 And now the third succeeding morning shone.
 I climb'd a cliff, with spear and sword in hand,
 Whose ridge o'erlook'd a shady length of land;
 To learn if aught of mortal works appear,
 Or cheerful voice of mortal strike the ear?
 From the high point I mark'd, in distant view,
 A stream of curling smoke, ascending blue,
 And spiry tops, the tufted trees above,
 Of *circé's* palace bosom'd in the grove.

Thither to haste, the region to explore,
 Was first my thought: But speeding back to shore
 I deem'd it best to visit first my crew,
 And send out spies the dubious coast to view.
 As down the hill I solitary go,
 Some pow'r divine who pities human wo
 Sent a tall stag, descending from the wood,
 To cool his fervour in the crystal flood;

Luxuriant on the wave-worn bank he lay,
 Stretch'd forth, and panting in the sunny ray.
 I launc'd my spear, and with a sudden wound
 Transpierc'd his back, and fix'd him to the ground.
 He falls, and mourns his fate with human cries:
 Through the wide wound the vital spirit flies.
 I drew, and casting on the river-side
 The bloody spear, his gather'd feet I ty'd
 With twining osiers, which the bank supply'd.
 An ell in length the pliant whisp I weav'd,
 And the huge body on my shoulders heav'd:
 Then leaning on the spear with both my hands,
 Upbore my load, and press'd the sinking sands
 With weighty steps, till at the ship I threw
 The welcome burden, and bespoke my crew.

Cheer up, my friends! it is not yet our fate
 To glide with ghosts through Pluto's gloomy gate.
 Food in the desert land, behold! is giv'n,
 Live, and enjoy the providence of heav'n.

The joyful crew survey his mighty size,
 And on the future banquet feast their eyes,
 As huge in length extended lay the beast;
 Then wash their hands, and hasten to the feast.
 There, till the setting sun roll'd down the light,
 They sat indulging in the genial rite.
 When ev'ning rose, and darkness cover'd o'er
 The face of things, we slept along the shore.
 But when the rosy morning warm'd the east,
 My men I summon'd, and these words address'd.

Followers and friends, attend what I propose,
 Ye sad companions of Ulysses' woes!

We know not here what land before us lies,
 Or to what quarter now we turn our eyes,
 Or where the sun shall set, or where shall rise.
 Here let us think (if thinking be not vain)
 If any counsel, any hope remain.
 Alas ! from yonder promontory's brow,
 I view'd the coast, a region flat and low ;
 An isle encircled with the boundless flood ;
 A length of thickets, and entangled wood.
 Some smoke I saw amid the forest rise,
 And all around it only seas and skies !

With broken hearts my sad companions stood,
 Mindful of Cyclops and his human food,
 And horrid Laestrigons, the men of blood.
 Prefaging tears apace began to rain ;
 But tears in mortal miseries are vain.
 In equal parts I strait divide my band,
 And name a chief each party to command ;
 I led the one, and of the other side
 Appointed brave Eurylochus the guide.
 Then in the brazen helm the lots we throw,
 And fortune casts Eurylochus to go.
 He march'd, with twice eleven in his train :
 Pensive they march, and pensive we remain.

The palace in a woody vale they found,
 High rais'd of stone ; a shaded space around,
 Where mountain-wolves and brindled lions roam,
 (By magic tam'd) familiar to the dome.
 With gentle blandishment our men they meet,
 And wag their tails, and fawning lick their feet.
 As from some feast a man returning late,
 His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate,

Rejoicing round, some morsel to receive,
 (Such as the good man ever us'd to give):
 Domestic thus the grisly beasts drew near;
 They gaze with wonder, not unmix'd with fear.
 Now on the threshold of the dome they stood,
 And heard a voice resounding through the wood:
 Plac'd at her loom within, the goddess sung;
 The vaulted roofs and solid pavement rung.
 O'er the fair web the rising figures shine,
 Immortal labour! worthy hands divine.
 Polites to the rest the question mov'd,
 (A gallant leader, and a man I lov'd).

What voice celestial, chanting to the loom,
 (Or nymph, or goddess), echoes from the room?
 Say, shall we seek access? With that they call;
 And wide unfold the portals of the hall.

The goddess rising, asks her guests to stay,
 Who blindly follow where she leads the way.
 Eurylochus alone of all the band,
 Suspecting fraud, more prudently remained.
 On thrones around, with downy cov'rings grac'd,
 With semblance fair th' unhappy men she plac'd.
 Milk newly press'd, the sacred flour of wheat,
 And honey fresh, and Pramnian wines the treat:
 But venom'd was the bread, and mix'd the bowl,
 With drugs of force to darken all the soul:
 Soon in the luscious feast themselves they lost,
 And drank oblivion of their native coast.
 Instant her circling wand the goddess waves,
 To hogs transforms 'em, and the sty receives.
 No more was seen the human form divine:
 Head, face, and members, bristle into swine:

Still curs'd with sense, their minds remain alone,
 And their own voice affrights them when they groan.
 Meanwhile the goddesses in disdain bestows
 The mast and acorn, brutal food ! and strows
 The fruits of cornel, as their feast, around ;
 Now prone and grov'ling on unfav'ry ground.

Eurylochus, with pensive steps and flow,
 Aghast returns ; the messenger of wo,
 And bitter fate. To speak he made essay,
 In vain essay'd, nor would his tongue obey,
 His swelling heart deny'd the words their way.
 But speaking tears the want of words supply,
 And the full soul bursts copious from his eye.
 Affrighted, anxious for our fellows fates,
 We press to hear what sadly he relates.

We went, Ulysses ! (such was thy command),
 Through the lone thicket, and the desert land.
 A palace in a woody vale we found
 Brown with dark forests, and with shades around.
 A voice celestial echo'd from the dome,
 Or nymph, or goddess, chanting to the loom.
 Access we sought, nor was access deny'd :
 Radiant she came, the portals open'd wide :
 The goddess mild invites the guests to stay :
 They blindly follow where she leads the way.
 I only wait behind, of all the train ;
 I waited long, and ey'd the doors in vain :
 The rest are vanish'd, none repass'd the gate ;
 And not a man appears to tell their fate.

I heard, and instant o'er my shoulders flung
 The belt in which my weighty faulchion hung,

(A beamy blade) ; then seiz'd the bended bow,
 And bade him guide the way, resolv'd to go.
 He, prostrate falling, with both hands embrac'd
 My knees, and, weeping, thus his suit address'd.

O king belov'd of Jove ! thy servant spare,
 And ah, thyself the rash attempt forbear !
 Never, alas ! thou never shalt return,
 Or see the wretched, for whose loss we mourn.
 With what remains, from certain ruin fly,
 And save the few not fated yet to die.

I answer'd stern. Inglorious then remain ;
 Here feast and loiter, and desert thy train.
 Alone, unfriended, will I tempt my way ;
 The laws of fate compel, and I obey.

This said, and scornful turning from the shore
 My haughty step, I stalk'd the valley o'er.
 Till now approaching nigh the magic bow'r,
 Where dwell th' inchantress, skill'd in herbs of
 pow'r ;

A form divine forth issu'd from the wood,
 (Immortal Hermes with the golden rod),
 In human semblance. On his bloomy face
 Youth smil'd celestial, with each op'ning grace.
 He seiz'd my hand, and gracious thus began :
 Ah whither roam'st thou ? much-enduring man !
 O blind to fate ! what led thy steps to rove
 The horrid mazes of this magic grove ?
 Each friend you seek in yon inclosure lies,
 All lost their form, inhabitants of sties.

Think'st thou by wit to model their escape ?
 Sooner shalt thou, a stranger to thy shape,

Fall prone their equal : First thy danger know,
 Then take the antidote the gods bestow.
 The plant I give through all the direful bow'r
 Shall guard thee, and avert the evil hour.
 Now hear her wicked arts. Before thy eyes
 The bowl shall sparkle, and the banquet rise ;
 Take this, nor from the faithless feast abstain,
 For temper'd drugs and poisons shall be vain.
 Soon as she strikes her wand, and gives the word,
 Draw forth, and brandish thy refulgent sword,
 And menace death : Those menaces shall move
 Her alter'd mind to blandishment and love.
 Nor shun the blessing proffer'd to thy arms ;
 Ascend her bed, and taste celestial charms :
 So shall thy tedious toils a respite find,
 And thy lost friends return to human kind.
 But swear her first, by those dread oaths that tie
 The pow'rs below, the blessed in the sky ;
 Lest to the naked secret fraud be meant,
 Or magic bind thee, cold and impotent.

Thus while he spoke, the sov'reign plant he drew,
 Where on th' all-bearing earth unmark'd it grew,
 And show'd its nature and its wondrous pow'r :
 Black was the root, but milky white the flow'r ;
 Moly the name, to mortals hard to find,
 But all is easy to th' aetherial kind.
 This Hermes gave, then gliding off the glade
 Shot to Olympus from the woodland shade.

While full of thought, revolving fates to come,
 I speed my passage to th' enchanted dome :
 Arriv'd, before the lofty gates I stay'd :
 The lofty gates the goddess wide display'd ;

She leads before, and to the feast invites ;
 I follow sadly to the magic rites.
 Radiant with starry studs, a silver seat
 Receiv'd my limbs ; a footstool eas'd my feet.
 She mix'd the potion, fraudulent of soul ;
 The poison mantled in the golden bowl.
 I took, and quaff'd it, confident in heav'n :
 Then wav'd the wand, and then the word was giv'n.
 Hence, to thy fellows ! (dreadful she began),
 Go, be a beast !—I heard, and yet was man.

Then sudden whirling, like a waving flame,
 My beamy faulchion, I assault the dame.
 Struck with unusual fear, she trembling cries ;
 She faints, she falls ; she lifts her weeping eyes.

What art thou ? say ! from whence, from whom you
 came ?

O more than human ! tell thy race, thy name.
 Amazing strength, these poisons to sustain !
 Not mortal thou, nor mortal is thy brain.
 Or art thou he, the man to come, (foretold
 By Hermes pow'rful with the wand of gold),
 The man from Troy, who wander'd ocean round ;
 The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
 Ulysses ? oh ! thy threatening fury cease,
 Sheathe thy bright sword, and join our hands in peace ;
 Let mutual joys our mutual trust combine,
 And love and love-born confidence be thine.

And how, dread Circe ! (furious I rejoin),
 Can love and love-born confidence be mine !
 Beneath thy charms when my companions groan,
 Transform'd to beasts, with accents not their own ?

O thou of fraudulent heart! shall I be led
 To share thy feast-rites, or ascend thy bed;
 That, all unarm'd, thy vengeance may have vent,
 And magic bind me, cold and impotent?
 Celestial as thou art, yet stand deny'd;
 Or swear that oath by which the gods are ty'd,
 Swear, in thy soul no latent frauds remain,
 Swear by the vow which never can be vain.

The goddess swore: Then seiz'd my hand, and led
 To the sweet transports of the genial bed.
 Ministrant to their queen, with busy care,
 Four faithful handmaids the soft rites prepare;
 Nymphs sprung from fountains, or from shady woods,
 Or the fair offspring of the sacred floods.
 One o'er the couches painted carpets threw,
 Whose purple lustre glow'd against the view;
 White linen lay beneath: Another plac'd
 The silver stands, with golden flasks grac'd:
 With dulcet bev'rage this the beaker crown'd,
 Fair in the midst, with gilded cups around:
 That in the tripod o'er the kindled pile
 The water pours; the bubbling waters boil:
 An ample vase receives the smoking wave;
 And, in the bath prepar'd, my limbs I lave:
 Reviving sweets repair the mind's decay,
 And take the painful sense of toil away.
 A vest and tunic o'er me next she threw,
 Fresh from the bath, and dropping balmy dew;
 Then led, and plac'd me on the sov'reign seat,
 With carpets spread, a footstool at my feet.
 The golden ew'r a nymph obsequious brings,
 Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs;

With copious water the bright vase supplies
 A silver laver of capacious size.
 I wash'd. The table in fair order spread,
 They heap the glitt'ring canisters with bread;
 Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
 Of choicest sort and flavour, rich repast!
 Circe in vain invites the feast to share;
 Absent I ponder, and absorpt in care:
 While scenes of wo rose anxious in my breast,
 The queen beheld me, and these words address.

Why sits Ulysses silent and apart,
 Some hoard of grief close-harbour'd at his heart?
 Untouch'd before thee stand the cates divine,
 And unregarded laughs the rosy wine.
 Can yet a doubt, or any dread remain,
 When sworn that oath which never can be vain?

I answer'd: Goddess, human is my breast,
 By justice sway'd, by tender pity prest:
 Ill fits it me, whose friends are sunk to beasts,
 To quaff thy bowls, or riot in thy feasts.
 Me wouldst thou please, for them thy cares employ,
 And them to me restore, and me to joy.

With that she parted: In her potent hand
 She bore the virtue of the magic wand.
 Then hast'ning to the sties, set wide the door,
 Urg'd forth, and drove the bristly herd before.
 Unwieldy, out they rush'd, with gen'ral cry,
 Enormous beasts! dishonest to the eye.
 Now touch'd by counter-charms, they change again,
 And stand majestic, and recall'd to men.
 Those hairs of late that bristled ev'ry part,
 Fall off; miraculous effect of art!

Till all the form in full proportion rise,
 More young, more large, more graceful to my eyes.
 They saw, they knew me, and with eager pace
 Clung to their master in a long embrace;
 Sad, pleasing sight! with tears each eye ran o'er,
 And sobbings of joy re-echo'd through the bow'r:
 Ev'n Circe wept, her adamant heart
 Felt pity enter, and sustain'd her part.

Son of Laertes! (then the queen began),
 Oh much-enduring, much-experienc'd man!
 Hasten to thy vessel on the sea-beat shore,
 Unload thy treasures, and thy galley moor;
 Then bring thy friends, secure from future harms,
 And in our grotto's stow thy spoils and arms.

She said. Obedient to her high command,
 I quit the place, and hasten to the strand.
 My sad companions on the beech I found,
 Their wistful eyes in floods of sorrow drown'd.
 As from fresh pastures and the dewy field
 (When loaded cribs their ev'ning-banquet yield)
 The lowing herds return; around them throng
 With leaps and bounds their late imprison'd young,
 Rush to their mothers with unruly joy,
 And echoing hills return the tender cry:
 So round me press'd, exulting at my sight,
 With cries and agonies of wild delight,
 The weeping sailors; nor less fierce their joy
 Than if return'd to Ithaca from Troy.
 Ah master! ever honour'd, ever dear,
 (These tender words on ev'ry side I hear),
 What other joy can equal thy return?
 Not that lov'd country for whose sight we mourn,

The foil that nurs'd us, and that gave us breath :
But ah ! relate our lost companions death.

I answer'd cheerful : Haste, your galley moor,
And bring our treasures and our arms ashore :
Those in yon hollow caverns let us lay ;
Then rise and follow where I lead the way.
Your fellows live : Believe your eyes and come
To taste the joys of Circe's sacred dome.
With ready speed the joyful crew obey :
Alone Eurylochus persuades their stay.
Whither, (he cry'd), ah whither will ye run ?
Seek ye to meet those evils ye should shun ?
Will you the terrors of the dome explore,
In swine to grovel, or in lions roar,
Or wolf-like howl away the midnight-hour
In dreadful watch around the magic bow'r ?
Remember Cyclops, and his bloody deed ;
The leader's rashness made the soldiers bleed.

I heard incens'd, and first resolv'd to speed
My flying faulchion at the rebel's head.
Dear as he was, by ties of kindred bound,
This hand had stretch'd him breathless on the ground ;
But all at once my interposing train
For mercy pleaded, nor could plead in vain.
Leave here the man who dares his prince desert,
Leave to repentance and his own sad heart,
To guard the ship. Seek we the sacred shades
Of Circe's palace, where Ulysses leads.

This with one voice declar'd, the rising train
Left the black vessel by the murm'ring main.
Shame touch'd Eurylochus's alter'd breast ;
He fear'd my threats, and follow'd with the rest.

Meanwhile the goddesses, with indulgent cares
 And social joys, the late transform'd repairs;
 The bath, the feast, their fainting soul renews;
 Rich in refulgent robes, and dropping balmy dew:
 Bright'ning with joy their eager eyes behold
 Each other's face, and each his story told;
 Then gushing tears the narrative confound,
 And with their sobs the vaulted roofs resound.
 When hush'd their passion, thus the goddess cries:
 Ulysses, taught by labours to be wise,
 Let this short memory of grief suffice. }
 To me are known the various woes ye bore,
 In storms by sea, in perils on the shore;
 Forget whatever was in fortune's pow'r,
 And share the pleasures of this genial hour.
 Such be your minds as ere you left your coast,
 Or learn'd to sorrow for your country lost.
 Exiles and wand'ers now, where'er you go,
 Too faithful memory renews your wo;
 The cause remov'd, habitual griefs remain,
 And the soul saddens by the use of pain.

Her kind entreaty mov'd the gen'ral breast;
 Tir'd with long toil, we willing sunk to rest.
 We ply'd the banquet, and the bowl we crown'd,
 Till the full circle of the year came round.
 But when the seasons, following in their train,
 Brought back the months, the days, and hours again;
 As from a lethargy at once they rise,
 And urge their chief with animating cries.

Is this, Ulysses, our inglorious lot?
 And is the name of Ithaca forgot?

Shall never the dear land in prospect rise,
Or the lov'd palace glitter in our eyes?

Melting I heard; yet till the sun's decline,
Prolong'd the feast, and quaff'd the rosy wine:
But, when the shades came on at ev'ning hour,
And all lay slumb'ring in the dusky bow'r,
I came a suppliant to fair Circe's bed,
The tender moment seiz'd, and thus I said.

Be mindful, goddess, of thy promise made;
Must sad Ulysses ever be delay'd?

Around their lord my sad companions mourn;
Each breast beats homeward, anxious to return:
If but a moment parted from thy eyes,
Their tears flow round me, and my heart complies.

Go, then (she cry'd) ah go! yet think, not I,
Not Circe, but the Fates your wish deny.
Ah hope not yet to breathe thy native air!
Far other journey first demands thy care;
To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath,
And view th' realms of darkness and of death.
There seek the Theban bard, depriv'd of sight,
Within irradiate with prophetic light;
To whom Persephone, entire and whole,
Gave to retain th' unseparated soul:
The rest are forms, of empty aether made;
Impassive semblance, and a flitting shade.

Struck at the word, my very heart was dead;
Pensive I sat; my tears bedew'd the bed;
To hate the light and life my soul begun,
And saw that all was grief beneath the sun.
Compos'd at length, the gushing tears suppress'd,
And my tofs'd limbs now weary'd into rest.

How shall I tread (I cry'd) ah Circe ! say,
 The dark descent ? and who shall guide the way ?
 Can living eyes behold the realms below ?
 What bark to waft me, and what wind to blow ?

Thy fated road, (the magic pow'r reply'd),
 Divine Ulysses ! asks no mortal guide.

Rear but the mast, the spacious sail display,
 The northern winds shall wing thee on thy way.

Soon shalt thou reach old Ocean's utmost ends,
 Where to the main the shelving shore descends ;

The barren trees of Proserpine's black woods,
 Poplars and willows, trembling o'er the floods :

There fix thy vessel in the lonely bay,
 And enter there the kingdoms void of day :

Where Phlegeton's loud torrents rushing down,
 Hiss in the flaming gulf of Acheron ;

And where, slow-rolling from the Stygian bed,
 Cocytus' lamentable waters spread :

Where the dark rock o'erhangs th' infernal lake,
 And mingling streams eternal murmurs make.

First draw thy faulchion, and on ev'ry side
 Trench the black earth a cubit long and wide :

To all the shades around libations pour,
 And o'er th' ingredients strow the hallow'd flour ;

New wine and milk, with honey temper'd bring,
 And living water from the crystal spring.

Then the wan shades and feeble ghosts implore,
 With promis'd off'rings on thy native shore ;

A barren cow, the stateliest of the isle,
 And, heap'd with various wealth, a blazing pile :

These to the rest ; but to the seer must bleed
 A fable ram, the pride of all thy breed.

These solemn vows and holy off'rings paid
 To all the phantom-nations of the dead ;
 Be next thy care the fable sheep to place
 Full o'er the pit, and hell-ward turn their face :
 But from th' infernal rite thine eye withdraw,
 And back to Ocean glance with rev'rend awe.
 Sudden shall skim along the dusky glades
 Thin airy shoals, and visionary shades.
 Then give command the sacrifice to haste ;
 Let the flea'd victims in the flames be cast,
 And sacred vows, and mystic song, apply'd
 To grisly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.
 Wide o'er the pool, thy faulchion wav'd around
 Shall drive the spectres from forbidden ground :
 The sacred draught shall all the dead forbear,
 Till awful from the shades arise the feer.
 Let him, oraculous, the end, the way,
 The turns of all thy future fate display,
 Thy pilgrimage to come, and remnant of thy day. }

So speaking, from the ruddy orient shone
 The morn conspicuous on her golden throne.
 The goddess with a radiant tunic drest
 My limbs, and o'er me cast a silken vest.
 Long flowing robes, of purest white, array
 The nymph, that added lustre to the day :
 A tiar wreath'd her head with many a fold ;
 Her waste was circled with a zone of gold.
 Forth issuing then, from place to place I flew ;
 Rouse man by man, and animate my crew.
 Rise, rise, my mates ! 'tis Circe gives command :
 Our journey calls us ; haste, and quit the land.
 All rise and follow, yet depart not all,
 For fate decreed one wretched man to fall.

A youth there was, Elpenor was he nam'd,
 Nor much for sense, nor much for courage fam'd;
 The youngest of our band, a vulgar soul,
 Born but to banquet, and to drain the bowl.
 He, hot and careless, on a turret's height
 With sleep repair'd the long debauch of night:
 The sudden tumult stirr'd him where he lay,
 And down he hasten'd, but forgot the way;
 Full endlong from the roof the sleeper fell,
 And snapp'd the spinal joint, and wak'd in hell.

The rest croud round me with an eager look;
 I met them with a sigh, and thus bespoke:
 Already, friends! ye think your toils are o'er;
 Your hopes already touch your native shore:
 Alas! far otherwise the nymph declares;
 Far other journey first demands our cares;
 To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath,
 The dreary realms of darkness and of death:
 To seek Tereias' awful shade below,
 And thence our fortunes and our fates to know.

My sad companions heard in deep despair;
 Frantic they tore their manly growth of hair;
 To earth they fell; the tears began to rain;
 But tears in mortal miseries are vain.
 Sadly they far'd along the sea-beat shore;
 Still heav'd their hearts, and still their eyes ran o'er.
 The ready victims at our bark we found,
 The sable ewe and ram together bound.
 For swift as thought, the goddess had been there,
 And thence had glided, viewless as the air:
 The paths of gods what mortal can survey?
 Who eyes their motion? who shall trace their way?

T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K XI.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The Descent into Hell.

ULYSSES continues his narration. How he arrived at the land of the Cimmerians, and what ceremonies he performed to invoke the dead. The manner of his descent, and the apparition of the shades. His conversation with Elpenor, and with Tereſias, who inform him, in a prophetic manner, of his fortunes to come. He meets his mother Anticlea, from whom he learns the state of his family. He ſees the ſhades of the ancient heroines, afterwards of the heroes, and converſes in particular with Agamemnon and Achilles. Ajax keeps at a ſullen diſtance, and diſdains to anſwer him. He then beholds Tityus, Tantalus, Syſiphus, Hercules; till he is deterred from further curioſity by the apparition of horrid ſpectres, and the cries of the wicked in torments.

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heroes, and converse in particular with Agamem-
non and Achilles. After a repast at a solemn distance,
and declines to answer him. He then beholds Ty-
tus, Thersites, Sycophant, Menelaus; till he is de-
tained from further cruise by the apparition of
horrable spectres, and the cries of the wretched in tor-
ment.

B O O K XI.

NOW to the shores we bend, a mournful train!
Climb the tall bark, and launch into the main:
At once the mast we rear, at once unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind:
Then pale and pensive stand, with cares oppress'd,
And solemn horror saddens ev'ry breast.
A fresh'ning breeze the magic pow'r * supply'd,
While the wing'd vessel flew along the tide;
Our oars we shipp'd: All day the swelling sails
Full from the guiding pilot catch'd the gales.

Now sunk the sun from his aerial height,
And o'er the shaded billows rush'd the night:
When lo! we reach'd old Ocean's utmost bounds,
Where rocks control his waves with ever-during
mounds.

There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells,
The dusky nation of Cimmeria dwells:
The sun ne'er views th' uncomfortable seats,
When radiant he advances, or retreats:
Unhappy race! whom endless night invades,
Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in shades.

The ship we moor on these obscure abodes;
Disbark the sheep, an off'ring to the gods;
And hell-ward bending, o'er the beach descry
The doleful passage to th' infernal sky.

* Circe.

The victims, vow'd to each Tartarian pow'r,
Eurylochus and Perimedes bore.

Here open'd hell, all hell I here implor'd,
And from the scabbard drew the shining sword;
And trenching the black earth on ev'ry side,
A cavern form'd, a cubit long and wide.
New wine, with honey-temper'd milk, we bring,
Then living waters from the crystal spring;
O'er these was strew'd the consecrated flour,
And on the surface shone the holy store.

Now the wan shades we hail, th' infernal gods,
To speed our course, and waft us o'er the floods:
So shall a barren heifer from the stall
Beneath the knife upon your altars fall;
So in our palace, at our safe return,
Rich with unnumber'd gifts the pile shall burn;
So shall a ram, the largest of the breed,
Black as these regions, to Tiresias bleed.

Thus solemn rites and holy vows we paid
To all the phantom nations of the dead.
Then dy'd the sheep; a purple torrent flow'd,
And all the cavern smok'd with streaming blood.
When lo! appear'd along the dusky coasts,
Thin airy shoals of visionary ghosts.
Fair, pensive youths, and soft enamour'd maids;
And wither'd elders, pale and wrinkled shades;
Ghastly with wounds the forms of warriors slain
Stalk'd with majestic port, a martial train:
These and a thousand more swarm'd o'er the ground,
And all the dire assembly shriek'd around.
Astonish'd at the sight, aghast I stood,
And a cold fear ran shiv'ring through my blood.

Strait I command the sacrifice to haste,
 Strait the flea'd victims to the flames are cast,
 And mutter'd vows, and mystic song apply'd
 To grisly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.

Now swift I wav'd my faulchion o'er the blood;
 Back started the pale throngs, and trembling stood.
 Round the black trench the gore untasted flows,
 Till awful from the shades Tiresias rose.

There, wand'ring thro' the gloom I first survey'd,
 New to the realms of death, Elpenor's shade:
 His cold remains all naked to the sky
 On distant shores unwept, unburied lie.
 Sad at the sight I stand, deep fix'd in wo,
 And ere I spoke, the tears began to flow.

O say what angry pow'r Elpenor led
 To glide in shades, and wander with the dead?
 How could thy soul, by realms and seas disjoin'd,
 Outfly the nimble sail, and leave the lagging wind?

The ghost reply'd: To hell my doom I owe,
 Daemons accurs'd, dire ministers of wo!
 My feet, through wine unfaithful to their weight,
 Betray'd me tumbling from a tow'ry height;
 Stagg'ring I reel'd, and as I reel'd I fell,
 Lux'd the neck joint—my soul descends to hell.
 But lend me aid, I now conjure thee lend,
 By the soft tie and sacred name of friend!
 By thy fond comfort! by thy father's cares!
 By lov'd Telemachus's blooming years!
 For well I know that soon the heav'nly pow'rs
 Will give thee back to day, and Circe's shores:
 There pious on my cold remains attend,
 There call to mind thy poor departed friend.

The tribute of a tear is all I crave,
 And the possession of a peaceful grave.
 But if unheard, in vain compassion plead,
 Revere the gods; the gods avenge the dead!
 A tomb along the wat'ry margin raise,
 The tomb with manly arms and trophies grace,
 To shew posterity Elpenor was,
 There high in air, memorial of my name,
 Fix the smooth oar, and bid me live to fame.

To whom with tears: These rites, oh mournful
 shade!

Due to thy ghost, shall to thy ghost be paid.

Still as I spoke, the phantom seem'd to moan,
 Tear follow'd tear, and groan succeeded groan.
 But as my waving sword the blood surrounds,
 The shade withdrew, and mutter'd empty sounds.

There as the wondrous visions I survey'd,
 All pale ascends my royal mother's shade:
 A queen, to Troy she saw our legions pass;
 Now a thin form is all Anticlea was!
 Struck at the sight I melt with filial wo,
 And down my cheek the pious sorrows flow:
 Yet as I shook my faulchion o'er the blood,
 Regardless of her son the parent stood.

When lo! the mighty Theban I behold:
 To guide his steps he bore a staff of gold;
 Awful he trod! majestic was his look!
 And from his holy lips these accents broke.

Why, mortal, wand'rest thou from cheerful day,
 To tread the downward, melancholy way?
 What angry gods to these dark regions led
 Thee yet alive, companion of the dead?

But sheath thy poniard, while my tongue relates
Heav'n's steadfast purpose, and thy future fates.

While yet he spoke, the prophet I obey'd,
And in the scabbard plung'd the glitt'ring blade :
Eager he quaff'd the gore, and then exprest
Dark things to come, the counsels of his breast.

Weary of light, Ulysses here explores
A prosp'rous voyage to his native shores ;
But know—by me unerring fates disclose
New trains of dangers, and new scenes of woes ;
I see ! I see, thy bark by Neptune tost,
For injur'd Cyclops, and his eyeball lost !
Yet to thy woes the gods decree an end,
If heav'n thou please ; and how to please attend !
Where on Tinacrian rocks the ocean roars,
Graze num'rous herds along the verdant shores ;
Though hunger preys, yet fly the dang'rous prey,
The herds are sacred to the god of day,
Who all surveys with his extensive eye
Above, below, on earth, and in the sky !
Rob not the god, and so propitious gales
Attend thy voyage, and impel thy sails :
But if his herds ye seize, beneath the waves
I see thy friends o'erwhelm'd in liquid graves !
The direful wreck Ulysses scarce survives !
Ulysses at his country scarce arrives !
Strangers thy guides ! nor there thy labours end,
New foes arise, domestic ills attend !
There foul adult'ers to thy bride resort,
And lordly gluttons riot in thy court.
But vengeance hastes amain ! these eyes behold
The deathful scene, princes on princes roll'd !

That done, a people far from sea explore,
 Who ne'er knew salt, or heard the billows roar,
 Or saw gay vessel stem the wat'ry plain,
 A painted wonder flying on the main!
 Bear on thy back an oar: With strange amaze
 A shepherd meeting thee, the oar surveys,
 And names a van: There fix it on the plain,
 To calm the god that holds the wat'ry reign;
 A threefold off'ring to his altar bring,
 A bull, a ram, a boar; and hail the ocean king.
 But home return'd, to each aetherial pow'r
 Slay the due victim in the genial hour:
 So peaceful shalt thou end thy blefsful days,
 And steal thyself from life by slow decays:
 Unknown to pain, in age resign thy breath,
 When late stern Neptune points the shaft with death:
 To the dark grave retiring as to rest,
 Thy people blessing, by thy people blest!
 Unerring truths, oh man! my lips relate;
 This is thy life to come, and this is fate.

To whom unmov'd: If this the gods prepare,
 What heav'n ordains, the wise with courage bear.
 But say, why yonder on the lonely strands,
 Unmindful of her son, Anticlea stands?
 Why to the ground she bends her downcast eye?
 Why is she silent, while her son is nigh?
 The latent cause, oh sacred seer, reveal!

Nor this, replies the seer, will I conceal.
 Know, to the spectres, that thy bev'rage taste,
 The scenes of life recur, and actions past;
 They, seal'd with truth, return the sure reply;
 The rest repell'd, a train oblivious, fly.

The phantom prophet ceas'd, and sunk from sight
To the black palace of eternal night.

Still in the dark abodes of death I stood,
When near Anticlea mov'd, and drank the blood.
Strait all the mother in her soul awakes,
And owning her Ulysses, thus she speaks.
Com'st thou, my son, alive, to realms beneath,
The doleful realms of darkness and of death?
Com'st thou alive from pure, aetherial day?
Dire is the region, dismal is the way!
Here lakes profound, there floods oppose their waves,
There the wide sea, with all his billows, raves!
Or, (since to dust proud Troy submits her tow'rs)
Com'st thou a wand'rer from the Phrygian shores?
Or say, since honour call'd thee to the field,
Hast thou thy Ithaca, thy bride, beheld?

Source of my life, I cry'd, from earth I fly
To seek Tiresias in the nether sky,
To learn my doom: For tofs'd from wo to wo,
In ev'ry land Ulysses finds a foe;
Nor have these eyes beheld my native shores,
Since in the dust proud Troy submits her tow'rs.

But, when thy soul from her sweet mansion fled,
Say, what distemper gave thee to the dead?
Has life's fair lamp declin'd by slow decays,
Or swift expir'd it in a sudden blaze?
Say, if my sire, good old Laertes, lives?
If yet Telemachus, my son, survives?
Say, by his rule is my dominion aw'd,
Or crush'd by traitors with an iron rod?
Say, if my spouse maintains her royal trust,
Though tempted, chaste, and obstinately just?

Or if no more her absent lord she wails,
But the false woman o'er the wife prevails?

Thus I : And thus the parent shade returns.

Thee, ever thee, thy faithful consort mourns :

Whether the night descends, or day prevails!

Thee she by night, and thee by day bewails.

Thee in Telemachus thy realm obeys;

In sacred groves celestial rites he pays,

And shares the banquet in superior state,

Grac'd with such honours as become the great.

Thy fire in solitude foment's his care :

The court is joyless, for thou art not there!

No costly carpets raise his hoary head,

No rich embroid'ry shines to grace his bed :

Ev'n when keen winter freezes in the skies,

Rank'd with his slaves on earth, the monarch lies :

Deep are his sighs, his visage pale, his dress

The garb of wo, and habit of distress.

And when the autumn takes his annual round,

The leafy honours scattering on the ground ;

Regardless of his years, abroad he lies,

His bed the leaves, his canopy the skies.

Thus cares on cares his painful days consume,

And bow his age with sorrow to the tomb!

For thee, my son, I wept my life away ;

For thee through hell's eternal dungeons stray :

Nor came my fate by lingering pains and slow,

Nor bent the silver-shafted queen her bow ;

No dire disease bereav'd me of my breath :

Thou, thou my son, wert my disease and death :

Unkindly with my love my son conspir'd,

For thee I liv'd, for absent thee expir'd.

Thrice in my arms I strove her shade to bind,
 Thrice through my arms she flipt like empty wind,
 Or dreams, the vain illusions of the mind. }
 Wild with despair, I shed a copious tide
 Of flowing tears, and thus with sighs reply'd.

Fly'st thou, lov'd shade, while I thus fondly mourn?
 Turn to my arms, to my embraces turn!
 Is it, ye pow'rs that smile at human harms!
 Too great a blest to weep within her arms?
 Or has hell's queen an empty image sent,
 That wretched I might ev'n my joys lament?

O son of wo! the pensive shade rejoin'd,
 Oh most inur'd to grief of all mankind!
 'Tis not the queen of hell who thee deceives:
 All, all are such, when life the body leaves;
 No more the substance of the man remains,
 Nor bounds the blood along the purple veins;
 These the funereal flames in atoms bear,
 To wander with the wind in empty air;
 While the impassive soul reluctant flies,
 Like a vain dream, to these infernal skies.
 But from the dark dominion speed thy way,
 And climb the steep ascent to upper day;
 To thy chaste bride the wondrous story tell,
 The woes, the horrors, and the laws of hell.

Thus while she spoke, in swarms hell's empress
 brings

Daughters and wives of heroes and of kings;
 Thick and more thick they gather round the blood,
 Ghost throng'd on ghost (a dire assembly) stood!
 Dauntless my sword I seiz'd: The airy crew,
 Swift, as it flash'd along the gloom, withdrew;

Then shade to shade in mutual forms succeeds,
Her race recounts, and their illustrious deeds.

Tyro began : Whom great Salmoneus bred ;
The royal partner of fam'd Cretheus' bed.
For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns
He pours his wat'ry store, the virgin burns ;
Smooth flows the gentle stream with wanton pride,
And in soft mazes rolls a silver tide :
As on his banks the maid enamour'd roves,
The monarch of the deep beholds and loves ;
In her Enipeus' form and borrow'd charms,
The am'rous god descends into her arms :
Around, a spacious arch of waves he throws,
And high in air the liquid mountain rose :
Thus in furrounding floods conceal'd he proves
The pleasing transport, and completes his loves :
Then softly sighing, he the fair addrest,
And as he spoke, her tender hand he prest.
Hail, happy nymph ! no vulgar births are ow'd
To the prolific raptures of a god :
Lo ! when nine times the moon renews her horn,
Two brother-heroes shall from thee be born ;
Thy early care the future worthies claim,
To point them to the arduous paths of fame.
But in thy breast th' important truth conceal,
Nor dare the secret of a god reveal :

For know, thou Neptune view'st ! and at my nod
Earth trembles, and the waves confess their god.

He added not, but mounting spurn'd the plain,
Then plung'd into the chambers of the main.

Now in the time's full process forth she brings
Jove's dread vicegerents, in two future kings ;

O'er proud Iolcos Pelias stretch'd his reign,
 And godlike Neleus rul'd the Pylian plain :
 Then fruitful, to her Cretheus' royal bed
 She gallant Pheres and fam'd Æson bred :
 From the same fountain Amytheon rose,
 Pleas'd with the din of war, and noble shout of foes.

There mov'd Antiope with haughty charms,
 Who blest'd the almighty Thund'rer in her arms :
 Hence sprung Amphion, hence brave Zethus came,
 Founders of Thebes, and men of mighty name ;
 Though bold in open field, they yet surround
 The town with walls, and mound inject on mound ;
 Here ramparts stood, there tow'rs rose high in air,
 And here through sev'n wide portals rush'd the war.

There with soft step the fair Alcmena trod,
 Who bore Alcides to the thund'ring god ;
 And Megara, who charm'd the son of Jove,
 And soften'd his stern soul to tender love.

Sullen and sour, with discontented mien,
 Jocasta frown'd, th' incestuous Theban queen :
 With her own son she join'd in nuptial bands,
 Though father's blood imbru'd his murd'rous hands :
 The gods and men the dire offence detest ;
 The gods with all their furies rend his breast :
 In lofty Thebes he wore th' imperial crown,
 A pompous wretch ! accurs'd upon a throne.
 The wife self-murder'd from a beam depends,
 And her foul soul to blackest hell descends ;
 Thence to her son the choicest plagues she brings,
 And the fiends haunt him with a thousand stings.

And now the beauteous Chloris I descry,
 A lovely shade, Amphion's youngest joy !

With gifts unnumber'd Neleus fought her arms,
 Nor paid too dearly for unequal'd charms;
 Great in Orchomenos, in Pylos great,
 He sway'd the sceptre with imperial state.
 Three gallant sons the joyful monarch told,
 Sage Nestor, Periclimenus the bold,
 And Chromius last; but of the softer race,
 One nymph alone, a miracle of grace.
 Kings on their thrones for lovely Pero burn,
 The fire denies, and kings rejected mourn.
 To him alone the beauteous prize he yields,
 Whose arm should ravish from Phylacian fields
 The herds of Iphyclus, detain'd in wrong;
 Wild, furious herds, unconquerably strong!
 This dares a seer, but nought the seer prevails;
 In beauty's cause illustriously he fails:
 Twelve moons the foe the captive youth detains
 In painful dungeons, and coercive chains;
 The foe at last, from durance where he lay,
 His art revering, gave him back to day;
 Won by prophetic knowledge, to fulfil
 The steadfast purpose of th' almighty will.

With graceful port advancing now I spy'd
 Leda the fair, the godlike Tyndar's bride:
 Hence Pollux sprung, who wields, with furious sway,
 The deathful gauntlet, matchless in the fray;
 And Castor, glorious on th' embattled plain,
 Curbs the proud steed, reluctant to the rein:
 By turns they visit this aetherial sky,
 And live alternate, and alternate die:
 In hell beneath, on earth, in heav'n above
 Reign the twin-gods, the fav'rite sons of Jove.

There Ephimedia trod the gloomy plain,
 Who charm'd the monarch of the boundless main :
 Hence Ephialtes, hence stern Otus sprung,
 More fierce than giants, more than giants strong :
 The earth o'erburden'd groan'd beneath their weight ;
 None but Orion e'er surpass'd their height :
 The wondrous youths had scarce nine winters told,
 When high in air, tremendous to behold,
 Nine ells aloft they rear'd their tow'ring head,
 And full nine cubits broad their shoulders spread.
 Proud of their strength, and more than mortal size,
 The gods they challenge, and affect the skies ;
 Heav'd on Olympus tott'ring Ossa stood ;
 On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood :
 Such were the youths ! had they to manhood grown,
 Almighty Jove had trembled on his throne.
 But ere the harvest of the beard began
 To bristle on the chin, and promise man,
 His shafts Apollo aim'd ; at once they sound,
 And stretch the giant-monsters o'er the ground.

There mournful Phaedra with sad Procris moves,
 Both beauteous shades, both hapless in their loves ;
 And near them walk'd, with solemn pace and slow,
 Sad Ariadne, partner of their wo :
 The royal Minos Ariadne bred ;
 She Theseus lov'd ; from Crete with Theseus fled :
 Swift to the Dian isle the hero flies,
 And tow'rd's his Athens bears the lovely prize ;
 There Bacchus with fierce rage Diana fires ;
 The goddess aims her shaft ; the nymph expires.

There Clymene and Maera I behold,
 'There Eriphyle weeps, who loosely fold,
 Her lord, her honour, for the lust of gold.
 But, should I all recount, the night would fail,
 Unequal to the melancholy tale :
 And all composing rest my nature craves,
 Here in the court, or yonder on the waves :
 In you I trust, and in the heav'nly pow'rs,
 To land Ulysses on his native shores.

He ceas'd : But left so charming on their ear
 His voice, that list'ning still they seem'd to hear :
 'Till rising up, Arete silence broke,
 Stretch'd out her snowy hand, and thus she spoke :

What wondrous man heav'n sends us in our guest !
 Through all his woes the hero shines confest :
 His comely port, his ample frame express
 A manly air, majestic in distress,
 He, as my guest, is my peculiar care ;
 You share the pleasure,—then in bounty share ;
 To worth in misery a rev'rence pay,
 And with a gen'rous hand reward his stay ;
 For since kind heav'n with wealth our realm has blest'd,
 Give it to heav'n, by aiding the distress'd.

'Then sage Echeueus, whose grave rev'rend brow
 The hand of time had silver'd o'er with snow,
 Mature in wisdom, rose : Your words, he cries,
 Demand obedience, for your words are wise.
 But let our king direct the glorious way
 To gen'rous acts ; our part is to obey.

While life informs these limbs, (the king reply'd),
 Well to deserve, be all my cares employ'd.

But here this night the royal guest detain,
 Till the sun flames along th' aetherial plain:
 Be it my task to fend, with ample stores,
 The stranger from our hospitable shores:
 Tread you my steps! 'Tis mine to lead the race,
 The first in glory, as the first in place.

To whom the prince: This night with joy I stay,
 O monarch great in virtue as in sway!
 If thou the circling year my stay controul,
 To raise a bounty noble as thy soul;
 The circling year I wait, with ampler stores
 And fitter pomp to hail my native shores:
 Then by my realms due homage would be paid;
 For wealthy kings are loyally obey'd!

O king! for such thou art, and sure thy blood
 Through veins (he cry'd) of royal fathers flow'd;
 Unlike those vagrants who on falsehood live,
 Skill'd in smooth tales, and artful to deceive;
 Thy better soul abhors the liar's part,
 Wise is thy voice, and noble is thy heart.
 Thy words like music ev'ry breast controul,
 Steal through the ear, and win upon the soul;
 Soft, as some song divine, thy story flows,
 Nor better could the Muse record thy woes.

But say, upon the dark and dismal coast,
 Saw'st thou the worthies of the Grecian host,
 The godlike leaders, who, in battle slain,
 Fell before Troy, and nobly press'd the plain?
 And lo! a length of night behind remains;
 The ev'ning stars still mount th' aetherial plains.
 Thy tale with raptures I could hear thee tell,
 Thy woes on earth, the wondrous scenes in hell,

Till in the vault of heav'n the stars decay,
And the sky reddens with the rising day.

O worthy of the pow'r the gods assign'd,
(Ulysses thus replies), a king in mind!
Since yet the early hour of night allows
Time for discourse, and time for soft repose,
If scenes of misery can entertain,
Woes I unfold, of woes a dismal train.
Prepare to hear of murder and of blood;
Of godlike heroes who uninjur'd stood
Amidst a war of spears in foreign lands,
Yet bled at home, and bled by female hands.

Now summon'd Proserpine to hell's black hall
The heroine shades; they vanish'd at her call.

When lo! advanc'd the forms of heroes slain
By stern Egysthus, a majestic train,
And high above the rest, Atrides press'd the plain.
He quaff'd the gore; and strait his soldier knew,
And from his eyes pour'd down the tender dew;
His arms he stretch'd; his arms the touch deceive,
Nor in the fond embrace, embraces give:
His substance vanish'd, and his strength decay'd,
Now all Atrides is an empty shade.

Mov'd at the sight, I for a space resign'd
To soft affliction all my manly mind:
At last with tears—O what relentless doom,
Imperial phantom, bow'd thee to the tomb?
Say, while the sea, and while the tempest raves,
Has fate oppress'd thee in the roaring waves,
Or nobly seiz'd thee in the dire alarms
Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms?

The ghost returns : O chief of human kind
 For active courage and a patient mind :
 Nor while the sea, nor while the tempest raves,
 Has fate oppress'd me on the roaring waves ;
 Nor nobly seiz'd me in the dire alarms
 Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms.
 Stabb'd by a murd'rous hand Atrides dy'd,
 A foul adult'rer, and a faithless bride ;
 Ev'n in my mirth, and at the friendly feast,
 O'er the full bowl, the traitor stabb'd his guest :
 Thus by the gory arm of slaughter falls
 The stately ox, and bleeds within the stalls.
 But not with me the direful murder ends,
 These, these expir'd ! their crime, they were my friends ;
 Thick as the hoars, which some luxurious lord
 Kills for the feast, to crown the nuptial board.
 When war has thunder'd with its loudest storms,
 Death thou hast seen in all her ghastly forms ;
 In duel met her, on the list'd ground,
 When hand to hand they wound return for wound ;
 But never have thy eyes astonish'd view'd
 So vile a deed, so dire a scene of blood.
 Ev'n in the flow of joy, when now the bowl
 Glows in our veins, and opens ev'ry soul,
 We groan, we faint ; with blood the dome is dy'd,
 And o'er the pavement floats the dreadful tide—
 Her breast all gore, with lamentable cries,
 The bleeding innocent Cassandra dies !
 Then, though pale death froze cold in ev'ry vein,
 My sword I strive to wield, but strive in vain ;
 Nor did my trait'refs wife these eyelids close,
 Or decently in death my limbs compose.

O woman, woman, when to ill thy mind
 Is bent, all hell contains no fouler fiend :
 And such was mine ! who basely plung'd her sword
 Through the fond bosom where she reign'd ador'd !
 Alas ! I hop'd, the toils of war o'ercome,
 To meet soft quiet and repose at home ;
 Delusive hope ! O wife, thy deeds disgrace
 The perjur'd sex, and blacken all the race ;
 And should posterity one virtuous find,
 Name Clytemnestra, they will curse the kind.

O injur'd shade ! I cry'd, what mighty woes
 To thy imperial race from woman rose !
 By woman here thou trad'st this mournful strand,
 And Greece by woman lies a desert land.

Warn'd by my ills, beware, the shade replies,
 Nor trust the sex that is so rarely wise :
 When earnest to explore thy secret breast,
 Unfold some trifle, but conceal the rest.
 But in thy comfort cease to fear a foe,
 For thee she feels sincerity of woe :
 When Troy first bled beneath the Grecian arms,
 She shone unrival'd with a blaze of charms,
 Thy infant son her fragrant bosom prest,
 Hung at her knee, or wanton'd at her breast ;
 But now the years a num'rous train have ran ;
 The blooming boy is ripen'd into man ;
 Thy eyes shall see him burn with noble fire,
 The fire shall bless his son, the son his fire :
 But my Orestes never met these eyes,
 Without one look the murder'd father dies.
 Then from a wretched friend this wisdom learn,
 Ev'n to thy queen disguis'd, unknown, return ;

For since of woman-kind so few are left,
Think all are false, nor ev'n the faithful trust.

But say, resides my son in royal port,
In rich Orchomenos, or Sparta's court?
Or say in Pyle? for yet he views the light,
Nor glides a phantom through the realms of night.

Then I: Thy suit is vain; nor can I say
If yet he breathes in realms of chearful day,
Or pale and wan beholds these nether skies.
Truth I revere; for wisdom never lies.

Thus in a tide of tears our sorrows flow,
And add new horrors to the realms of wo:
Till side by side along the dreary coast
Advanc'd Achilles' and Patroclus' ghost,
A friendly pair! near these the Pylian * stray'd,
And tow'ring Ajax, an illustrious shade!
War was his joy, and pleas'd with loud alarms,
Non but Pelides brighter shone in arms.

Through the thick gloom his friend Achilles knew,
And as he speaks, the tears descend in dew.

Com'st thou alive to view the Stygian bounds,
Where the wan spectres walk eternal rounds;
Nor fear'st the dark and dismal waste to trade,
Throng'd with pale ghosts, familiar with the dead?

To whom with sighs: I pass these dreadful gates
To seek the Theban, and consult the Fates:
For still distress'd I rove from coast to coast,
Lost to my friends, and to my country lost.
But sure the eye of time beholds no name
So bless'd as thine in all the rolls of fame;

* Antilochus.

Alive, we hail'd thee with our guardian gods;
And dead, thou rul'st a king in these abodes.

Talk not of ruling in this dol'rous gloom,
Nor think vain words (he cry'd) can ease my doom:
Rather I chuse laboriously to bear
A weight of woes, and breathe the vital air,
A slave to some poor hind that toils for bread,
Than reign the scepter'd monarch of the dead.
But say, if in my steps my son proceeds,
And emulates his godlike father's deeds?
If at the clash of arms, and shout of foes,
Swells his bold heart, his bosom nobly glows?
Say, if my sire, the rev'rend Peleus, reigns
Great in his Phthia, and his throne maintains;
Or weak and old, my youthful arm demands,
To fix the sceptre steadfast in his hands?
O might the lamp of life rekindled burn,
And death release me from the silent urn!
This arm that thunder'd o'er the Phrygian plain,
And swell'd the ground with mountains of the slain,
Should vindicate my injur'd father's fame,
Crush the proud rebel, and assert his claim.

Illustrious shade! (I cry'd), of Peleus' fates
No circumstance the voice of fame relates:
But hear with pleas'd attention the renown,
The wars and wisdom of thy gallant son:
With me from Scyros to the field of fame,
Radiant in arms, the blooming hero came.
When Greece assembled all her hundred states,
To ripen counsels, and decide debates;
Heav'ns! how he charm'd us with a flow of sense,
And won the heart with manly eloquence!

He first was seen of all the peers to rise,
 The third in wisdom where they all were wise;
 But when, to try the fortune of the day,
 Host mov'd tow'rd host in terrible array,
 Before the van, impatient for the fight,
 With martial port he strode, and stern delight;
 Heaps strew'd on heaps beneath his faulchion groan'd,
 And monuments of dead deform'd the ground.
 The time would fail, should I in order tell
 What foes were vanquish'd, and what numbers fell:
 How, lost through love, Eurypylus was slain,
 And round him bled his bold Cetæan train.
 To Troy no hero came, of nobler line,
 Or if of nobler, Memnon, it was thine.

When Ilion in the horse receiv'd her doom,
 And unseen armies ambush'd in its womb;
 Greece gave her latent warriors to my care,
 'Twas mine on Troy to pour th' imprison'd war;
 Then when the boldest bosom beat with fear,
 When the stern eyes of heroes dropp'd a tear;
 Fierce in his look his ardent valour glow'd,
 Flush'd in his cheek, or fally'd in his blood;
 Indignant in the dark recess he stands,
 Pants for the battle, and the war demands;
 His voice breath'd death, and with a martial air
 He grasp'd his sword, and shook his glitt'ring spear.
 And when the gods our arms with conquest crown'd,
 When Troy's proud bulwarks smok'd upon the ground,
 Greece, to reward her foldier's gallant toils,
 Heap'd high his navy with unnumber'd spoils.

Thus great in glory from the din of war
 Safe he return'd, without one hostile scar;

Though spears in iron tempests rain'd around,
Yet innocent they play'd, and guiltless of a wound.

While yet I spoke, the shade with transport glow'd,
Rose in his majesty, and nobler trode;

With haughty stalk he sought the distant glades
Of warrior-kings, and join'd th' illustrious shades.

Now, without number, ghost by ghost arose,
All wailing with unutterable woes.

Alone, apart, in discontented mood,

A gloomy shade! the fullen Ajax stood;

For ever sad, with proud disdain he pin'd,

And the lost arms for ever stung his mind;

Though to the contest Thetis gave the laws,

And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cause.

O why was I victorious in the strife?

O dear-bought honour with so brave a life!

With him the strength of war, the soldier's pride,

Our second hope to great Achilles dy'd!

Touch'd at the sight, from tears I scarce refrain,

And tender sorrow thrills in every vein;

Pensive and sad I stand, at length accost,

With accents mild, th' inexorable ghost.

Still burns thy rage? and can brave souls resent

Ev'n after death? Relent, great shade, relent!

Perish those arms which by the gods decree

Accurs'd our army with the loss of thee!

With thee we fell; Greece wept thy hapless fates;

And shook astonish'd through her hundred states;

Not more, when great Achilles press'd the ground,

And breath'd his manly spirit through the wound.

O deem thy fall not ow'd to man's decree!

Jove hated Greece, and punish'd Greece in thee!

Turn then, oh peaceful turn ! thy wrath controul,
And calm the raging tempest of thy soul.

While yet I speak, the shade disdains to stay,
In silence turns, and fullen stalks away.

Touch'd at his four retreat, through deepest night,
Thro' hell's black bounds I had pursu'd his flight,
And forc'd the stubborn spectre to reply ;
But wondrous visions drew my curious eye.
High on a throne tremendous to behold,
Stern Minos waves a mace of burnish'd gold ;
Around, ten thousand thousand spectres stand
Through the wide dome of Dis, a trembling band.
Still as they plead, the fatal lots he rolls,
Absolves the just, and dooms the guilty souls.

There huge Orion of portentous size,
Swift thro' the gloom a giant-hunter flies :
A pond'rous mace of brass with direful sway
Aloft he whirls, to crush the savage prey ;
Stern beasts in trains that by his truncheon fell,
Now grisly forms, shoot o'er the lawns of hell.

There Tityus large and long, in fetters bound,
O'erspreads nine acres of infernal ground ;
Two rav'nous vultures, furious for their food,
Scream o'er the fiend, and riot in his blood,
Incessant gore the liver in his breast ;
Th' immortal liver grows, and gives th' immortal feast.
For as o'er Panope's enamel'd plains
Latona journey'd to the Pythian fanes,
With haughty love th' audacious monster strove
To force the goddess, and to rival Jove.

There Tantalus along the Stygian bounds
Pours out deep groans, with groans all hell resounds,

Ev'n in the circling floods refreshment craves,
 And pines with thirst amidst a sea of waves :
 When to the water he his lip applies,
 Back from his lip the treach'rous water flies.
 Above, beneath, around his hapless head,
 Trees of all kinds delicious fruitage spread ;
 There figs sky-dy'd a purple hue disclose,
 Green looks the olive, the pomegranate glows ;
 There dangling pears exalted scents unfold,
 And yellow apples ripen into gold :
 The fruit he strives to seize : But blasts arise,
 Toss it on high, and whirl it to the skies.

I turn'd my eye, and as I turn'd survey'd,
 A mournful vision ! the Sisyphian shade ;
 With many a weary step, and many a groan,
 Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone :
 The huge round stone, resulting with a bound,
 Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the
 ground ;

Again the restless orb his toil renews,
 Dust mounts in clouds, and sweat descends in dews.

Now I the strength of Hercules behold,
 A tow'ring spectre of gigantic mold,
 A shadowy form ! for high in heav'n's abodes
 Himself resides, a god among the gods :
 There in the bright assemblies of the skies,
 He nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.
 Here hov'ring ghosts, like fowl, his shade surround,
 And clang their pinions with terrific sound ;
 Gloomy as night he stands, in act to throw
 Th' aerial arrow from the twanging bow.

Around his breast a wondrous zone is roll'd,
 Where woodland monsters grin in fretted gold ;
 There fullen lions sternly seem to roar,
 The bear to growl, to foam the tusky boar ;
 There War, and Havock, and Destruction stood,
 And vengeful Murder red with human blood !
 Thus terribly adorn'd the figures shine,
 Inimitably wrought with skill divine.

The mighty ghost advanc'd with awful look,
 And turning his grim visage, sternly spoke.

O exercis'd in grief ! by arts refin'd !
 O taught to bear the wrongs of base mankind !
 Such, such was I ! still toss'd from care to care,
 While in your world I drew the vital air !
 Ev'n I who from the Lord of thunders rose,
 Bore toils, and dangers, and a weight of woes ;
 To a base monarch still a slave confin'd,
 (The hardest bondage to a gen'rous mind !)
 Down to these worlds I trod the dismal way,
 And dragg'd the three-mouth'd dog to upper day ;
 Ev'n hell I conquer'd, through the friendly aid
 Of Maia's offspring and the martial maid.

Thus he ; nor deign'd for our reply to stay,
 But turning stalk'd with giant-strides away.

Curious to view the kings of antient days,
 The mighty dead that live in endless praise,
 Resolv'd I stand ; and haply had survey'd
 The godlike Theseus, and Perithous' shade ;
 But swarms of spectres rose from deepest hell,
 With bloodless visage, and with hideous yell,
 They scream, they shriek ; sad groans and dismal sounds
 Stun my fear'd ears, and pierce hell's utmost bounds.

No more my heart the dismal din sustains,
 And my cold blood hangs shiv'ring in my veins ;
 Lest Gorgon rising from th' infernal lakes,
 With horrors arm'd, and curls of hissing snakes,
 Should fix me, stiffen'd at the monstrous sight,
 A stony image, in eternal night !
 Straight from the direful coast to purer air
 I speed my flight, and to my mates repair.
 My mates ascend the ship ; they strike their oars ;
 The mountains lessen, and retreat the shores :
 Swift o'er the waves we fly ; the fresh'ning gales
 Sing through the shrouds, and stretch the swelling sails.

THE
ODYSSEY.

BOOK XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Sirens, Scylla, and Charybdis.

He relates, how, after his return from the shades, he was sent by Circe on his voyage, by the coast of the Sirens, and by the strait of Scylla and Charybdis : The manner in which he escaped those dangers : How, being cast on the island Trinacria, his companions destroyed the oxen of the sun : The vengeance that followed : How all perished by shipwreck, except himself, who, swimming on the mast of the ship, arrived on the island of Calypso. With which his narration concludes,

1872

XII O O K

sent by Crichton on his voyage, by the coast of the

manner in which he escaped their dangers :

being cut on the blind Tinsell, his com-

B O O K XII.

THUS o'er the rolling surge the vessel flies,
Till from the waves th' Ææcan hills arise.
Here the gay Morn resides in radiant bow'rs,
Here keeps her revels with the dancing Hours;
Here Phoebus rising in th' ætherial way,
Thro' heav'n's bright portals pours the beamy day:
At once we fix our halbers on the land,
At once descend, and press the desert sand;
There worn and wasted, lose our cares in sleep,
To the hoarse murmurs of the rolling deep.

Soon as the morn restor'd the day, we paid
Sepulchral honours to Elpenor's shade.
Now by the axe the rushing forest-bends,
And the huge pile along the shore ascends.
Around we stand, a melancholy train!
And a loud groan re-echoes from the main.
Fierce o'er the pyre, by fanning breezes spread,
The hungry flame devours the silent dead.
A rising tomb, the silent dead to grace,
Fast by the roarings of the main we place;
The rising tomb a lofty column bore,
And high above it rose the tap'ring oar.

Meantime the * goddess our return survey'd
From the pale ghosts, and hell's tremendous shade.
Swift she descends: A train of nymphs divine
Bear the rich viands and the gen'rous wine:

In act to speak the * pow'r of magic stands,
And graceful thus accosts the list'ning bands.

O sons of wo ! decreed by adverse fates
Alive to pass through hell's eternal gates !
All, soon or late, are doom'd that path to tread :
More wretched you ! twice number'd with the dead !
This day adjourn your cares ; exalt your souls,
Indulge the taste, and drain the sparkling bowls :
And when the morn unveils her saffron ray,
Spread your broad sails, and plough the liquid way.
Lo I this night, your faithful guide, explain
Your woes by land, your dangers on the main.

The goddess spoke. In feasts we waste the day,
Till Phoebus downward plung'd his burning ray ;
Then sable night ascends, and balmy rest
Seals ev'ry eye, and calms the troubled breast.
Then curious she commands me to relate
The dreadful scenes of Pluto's dreary state.
She sat in silence while the tale I tell,
The wondrous visions, and the laws of hell.

Then thus : The lot of man the gods dispose ;
These ills are past ; now hear thy future woes.
O prince attend ! some fav'ring pow'r be kind,
And print th' important story on thy mind !

Next, where the Sirens dwell, you plough the seas ;
Their song is death, and makes destruction please.
Unblest'd the man, whom music wins to stay
Nigh the curs'd shore, and listen to the lay !
No more that wretch shall view the joys of life,
His blooming offspring, or his beauteous wife !

* Circe.

In verdant meads they sport, and wide around
 Lie human bones, that whiten all the ground ;
 The ground polluted floats with human gore,
 And human carnage taints the dreadful shore.
 Fly swift the dang'rous coast : Let ev'ry ear
 Be stopp'd against the song ! 'tis death to hear !
 Firm to the mast with chains thyself be bound,
 Nor trust thy virtue to th' enchanting sound.
 If mad with transport, freedom thou demand,
 Be ev'ry fetter strain'd, and added band to band.

These seas o'erpass'd, be wise ! but I refrain
 To mark distinct thy voyage o'er the main :
 New horrors rise ! let prudence be thy guide,
 And guard thy various passage through the tide.

High o'er the main two rocks exalt their brow,
 The boiling billows thund'ring roll below ;
 Through the vast waves the dreadful wonders move,
 Hence nam'd Erratic by the gods above.
 No bird of air, no dove of swiftest wing,
 That bears ambrosia to th' aetherial king,
 Shuns the dire rocks : In vain she cuts the skies,
 The dire rocks meet, and crush her as she flies :
 Not the fleet bark, when prosp'rous breezes play,
 Ploughs o'er that roaring furge its desp'rate way ;
 O'erwhelm'd it sinks : While round a smoke expires,
 And the waves flashing seem to burn with fires.
 Scarce the fam'd Argo pass'd these raging floods,
 The sacred Argo, fill'd with demigods !
 Ev'n she had sunk ; but Jove's imperial bride
 Wing'd her fleet sail, and push'd her o'er the tide.

High in the air the rock its summit shrouds,
 In brooding tempests, and in rolling clouds ;

Loud storms around, and mists eternal rise,
 Beat its bleak brow, and intercept the skies.
 When all the broad expansion, bright with day,
 Glows with th' autumnal or the summer ray,
 The summer and the autumn glow in vain,
 The sky for ever lours, for ever clouds remain.
 Impervious to the step of man it stands,
 Tho' born by twenty feet, tho' arm'd with twenty
 hands ;
 Smooth as the polish of the mirror rise
 The slipp'ry sides, and shoot into the skies.
 Full in the centre of this rock display'd,
 A yawning cavern casts a dreadful shade :
 Nor the fleet arrow from the twanging bow,
 Sent with full force, could reach the depth below.
 Wide to the west the horrid gulf extends,
 And the dire passage down to hell descends.
 O fly the dreadful sight ! expand thy sails,
 Ply the strong oar, and catch the nimble gales ;
 Here Scylla bellows from her dire abodes,
 Tremendous pest ! abhorr'd by man and gods !
 Hideous her voice, and with less terrors roar
 The whelps of lions in the midnight hour.
 Twelve feet deform'd and foul the fiend dispreads :
 Six horrid necks she rears, and six terrific heads ;
 Her jaws grin dreadful with three rows of teeth ;
 Jaggy they stand, the gaping den of death :
 Her parts obscene the raging billows hide ;
 Her bosom terribly o'erlooks the tide.
 When stung with hunger she embroils the flood,
 The sea-dog and the dolphin are her food ;

She makes the huge leviathan her prey,
 And all the monsters of the wat'ry way ;
 The swiftest racer of the azure plain
 Here fills her sails and spreads her oars in vain ;
 Fell Scylla rises, in her fury roars,
 At once six mouths expands, at once six men devours.

Close by, a rock of less enormous height
 Breaks the wild waves, and forms a dang'rous streight ;
 Full on its crown a fig's green branches rise,
 And shoot a leafy forest to the skies ;
 Beneath, Charybdis holds her boist'rous reign
 'Midst roaring whirlpools, and absorbs the main ;
 Thrice in her gulfs the boiling seas subside,
 Thrice in dire thunders she refunds the tide.
 Oh, if thy vessel plough the direful waves
 When seas retreating roar within her caves,
 Ye perish all ! though he who rules the main
 Lend his strong aid, his aid he lends in vain.
 Ah, shun the horrid gulf ! by Scylla fly ;
 'Tis better six to lose, than all to die.

I then : O nymph propitious to my pray'r,
 Goddess divine, my guardian pow'r, declare,
 Is the foul fiend from human vengeance freed ?
 Or if I rise in arms, can Scylla bleed ?

Then she : O worn by toils, oh broke in fight !
 Still are new toils and war thy dire delight ?
 Will martial flames for ever fire thy mind,
 And never, never be to heav'n resign'd ?
 How vain thy efforts to avenge the wrong ?
 Deathless the pest ! impenetrably strong !
 Furious and fell ! tremendous to behold !
 Ev'n with a look she withers all the bold !

She mocks the weak attempts of human might;
 O fly her rage! thy conquest is thy flight.
 If but to seize thy arms thou make delay,
 Again the fury vindicates her prey,
 Her six mouths yawn, and six are snatch'd away.
 From her foul womb Crataeis gave to air
 This dreadful pest! To her direct thy pray'r,
 To curb the monster in her dire abodes,
 And guard thee through the tumult of the floods.
 Thence to Trinacria's shore you bend your way,
 Where graze thy herds, illustrious source of day:
 Sev'n herds, sev'n flocks enrich the sacred plains,
 Each herd, each flock full fifty heads contains;
 The wondrous kind a length of age survey,
 By breed increase not, nor by death decay.
 Two sister-goddesses possess the plain,
 The constant guardians of the woolly train;
 Lampetie fair, and Phaethusa young,
 From Phoebus and the bright Neaera sprung:
 Here watchful o'er the flocks, in shady bow'rs
 And flow'ry meads, they waste the joyous hours.
 Rob not the god! and so propitious gales
 Attend thy voyage, and impel thy sails:
 But, if thy impious hands the flocks destroy,
 The gods, the gods avenge it, and ye die!
 'Tis thine alone (thy friends and navy lost)
 Through tedious toils to view thy native coast.

She ceas'd: And now arose the morning ray;
 Swift to her dome the goddess held her way.
 Then to my mates I measur'd back the plain,
 Climb'd the tall bark, and rush'd into the main:

Then bending to the stroke, their oars they drew
 To their broad breasts, and swift the galley flew.
 Up-sprung a brisker breeze; with fresh'ning gales
 The friendly goddess stretch'd the swelling sails:
 We drop our oars; at ease the pilot guides;
 The vessel light along the level glides;
 When rising sad and slow, with pensive look,
 Thus to the melancholy train I spoke:

O friends, oh ever partners of my woes!
 Attend, while I what heav'n foredooms disclose;
 Hear all! fate hangs o'er all! on you it lies
 To live, or perish; to be safe, be wise!

In flow'ry meads the sportive Sirens play,
 Touch the soft lyre, and tune the vocal lay.
 Me, me alone, with fetters firmly bound,
 The gods allow to hear the dang'rous sound.
 Hear and obey: If freedom I demand,
 Be ev'ry fetter strain'd, be added band to band.

While yet I speak, the winged galley flies,
 And lo the Siren shores like mists arise.
 Sunk were at once the winds; the air above,
 And waves below, at once forgot to move:
 Some daemon calm'd the air, and smooth'd the deep,
 Hush'd the loud winds, and charm'd the waves to sleep.
 Now every sail we furl, each oar we ply;
 Lash'd by the stroke the frothy waters fly.
 The ductile wax with busy hands I mold,
 And cleft in fragments, and the fragments roll'd:
 Th' aerial region now grew warm with day,
 The wax dissolv'd beneath the burning ray;
 Then ev'ry ear I barr'd against the strain,
 And from access of frenzy lock'd the brain.

Now round the mast my mates the fetters roll'd,
 And bound me limb by limb, with fold on fold.
 Then bending to the stroke, the active train
 Plunge all at once their oars, and cleave the main.

While to the shore the rapid vessel flies,
 Our swift approach the Siren quire descries;
 Celestial music warbles from their tongue,
 And thus the sweet deluders tune the song.

O stay, oh pride of Greece! Ulysses, stay!
 O cease thy course, and listen to our lay!
 Bless'd is the man ordain'd our voice to hear;
 The song instructs the soul, and charms the ear.
 Approach! thy soul shall into raptures rise!
 Approach! and learn new wisdom from the wise!
 We know whate'er the kings of mighty name
 Achiev'd at Ilion in the field of fame;
 Whate'er beneath the sun's bright journey lies.
 O stay, and learn new wisdom from the wise!

Thus the sweet charmers warbled o'er the main;
 My soul takes wing to meet the heav'nly strain;
 I give the sign, and struggle to be free:
 Swift row my mates, and shoot along the sea;
 New chains they add, and rapid urge the way,
 Till dying off, the distant sounds decay:
 Then scudding swiftly from the dangerous ground,
 The deafen'd ear unlock'd, the chains unbound.

Now all at once, tremendous scenes unfold;
 Thunder'd the deeps, the smoking billows roll'd!
 Tumultuous waves embroil'd the bellowing flood;
 All trembling, deafen'd, and aghast we stood!
 No more the vessel plough'd the dreadful wave,
 Fear seiz'd the mighty, and unnerv'd the brave;

Each dropp'd his oar : But swift from man to man
 With look serene I turn'd, and thus began.
 O friends ! oh often try'd in adverse storms !
 With ills familiar in more dreadful forms !
 Deep in the dire Cyclopean den you lay,
 Yet safe return'd——Ulysses led the way.
 Learn courage hence ! and in my care confide :
 Lo ! still the same Ulysses is your guide !
 Attend my words ! your oars incessant ply ;
 Strain ev'ry nerve, and bid the vessel fly.
 If from yon jostling rocks and wavy war
 Jove safety grants, he grants it to your care.
 And thou whose guiding hand directs our way,
 Pilot, attentive listen and obey !
 Bear wide thy course, nor plough those angry waves
 Where rolls yon smoke, yon tumbling ocean raves ;
 Steer by the higher rock ; lest whirl'd around
 We sink, beneath the circling eddy drown'd.

While yet I speak, at once their oars they seize,
 Stretch to the stroke, and brush the working seas.
 Cautious the name of Scylla I suppress ;
 That dreadful sound had chill'd the boldest breast.

Meantime, forgetful of the voice divine,
 All dreadful bright my limbs in armour shine ;
 High on the deck I take my dang'rous stand,
 Two glitt'ring jav'lins lighten in my hand ;
 Prepar'd to whirl the whizzing spear I stay,
 Till the fell fiend arise to seize her prey.
 Around the dungeon, studious to behold
 The hideous pest, my lab'ring eyes I roll'd ;
 In vain ! the dismal dungeon dark as night
 Veils the dire monster, and confounds the sight.

Now thro' the rocks, appall'd with deep dismay,
We bend our course, and stem the desp'rate way;
Dire Scylla there a scene of horror forms,
And here Charybdis fills the deep with storms.
When the tide rushes from her rumbling caves,
The rough rock roars; tumultuous boil the waves;
They toss, they foam, a wild confusion raise,
Like waters bubbling o'er the fiery blaze;
Eternal mists obscure th' aerial plain,
And high above the rock she spouts the main;
When in her gulfs the rushing sea subsides,
She drains the ocean with the reflux tides:
The rock rebellows with a thund'ring sound;
Deep, wondrous deep, below appears the ground.

Struck with despair, with trembling hearts we view'd
The yawning dungeon, and the tumbling flood;
When lo! fierce Scylla stoop'd to seize her prey,
Stretch'd her dire jaws, and swipt six men away;
Chiefs of renown! loud echoing shrieks arise;
I turn and view them quiv'ring in the skies;
They call, and aid with outstretch'd arms implore:
In vain they call! those arms are stretch'd no more.
As from some rock that overhangs the flood,
The silent fisher casts th' insidious food,
With fraudulent care he waits the finny prize,
And sudden lifts it quiv'ring to the skies:
So the foul monster lifts her prey on high;
So pant the wretches, struggling in the sky;
In the wide dungeon she devours her food,
And the flesh trembles while she churns the blood.
Worn as I am with griefs, with care decay'd,
Never, I never scene so dire survey'd!

My shiv'ring blood congeal'd, forgot to flow;
Aghast I stood, a monument of woe!

Now from the rocks the rapid vessel flies,
And the hoarse din like distant thunder dies:
To Sol's bright isle our voyage we pursue;
And now the glitt'ring mountains rise to view.
There, sacred to the radiant god of day,
Graze the fair herds, the flocks promiscuous stray:
Then suddenly was heard along the main
To low the ox, to bleat the woolly train:
Strait to my anxious thoughts the sound convey'd
The words of Circe and the Theban shade;
Warn'd by their awful voice these shores to shun,
With cautious fears oppress'd, I thus begun.

O friends! oh ever exercis'd in care!
Hear heav'n's commands, and rev'rence what ye hear!
To fly these shores the prescient Theban shade
And Circe warns! O be their voice obey'd!
Some mighty wo relentless heav'n forebodes;
Fly the dire regions, and revere the gods!

While yet I spoke, a sudden sorrow ran
Thro' ev'ry breast, and spread from man to man,
Till wrathful thus Eurylochus began.

O cruel thou! some fury sure has steel'd
That stubborn soul, by toil untaught to yield!
From sleep debarr'd, we sink from woes to woes,
And, cruel, enviest thou a short repose?
Still must we restless rove, new seas explore,
The sun descending, and so near the shore?
And lo! the night begins her gloomy reign,
And doubles all the terrors of the main.

Oft in the dead of night loud winds arise,
 Lash the wild surge, and bluster in the skies;
 Oh, should the fierce south-west his rage display,
 And toss with rising storms the wat'ry way,
 Though gods descend from heav'n's aerial plain
 To lend us aid, the gods descend in vain:
 Then while the night displays her awful shade,
 Sweet time of slumber! be the night obey'd!
 Haste ye to land: And when the morning-ray
 Sheds her bright beams, pursue the destin'd way.
 A sudden joy in ev'ry bosom rose;
 So will'd some daemon, minister of woes!

To whom with grief—O swift to be undone,
 Constrain'd I act what wisdom bids me shun.
 But yonder herds and yonder flocks forbear;
 Attest the heav'ns, and call the gods to hear:
 Content, an innocent repast display,
 By Circe giv'n, and fly the dang'rous prey.

Thus I: And while to shore the vessel flies,
 With hands uplifted they attest the skies;
 Then, where a fountain's gurgling waters play,
 They rush to land, and end in feasts the day:
 They feed; they quaff; and now (their hunger fled)
 Sigh for their friends devour'd, and mourn the dead.
 Nor cease the tears, till each in slumber shares
 A sweet forgetfulness of human cares.

Now far the night advanc'd her gloomy reign,
 And setting stars roll'd down the azure plain;
 When, at the voice of Jove, wild whirlwinds rise,
 And clouds and double darkness veil the skies;
 The moon, the stars, the bright aetherial host,
 Seem as extinct, and all their splendors lost;

The furious tempest roars with dreadful sound:
 Air thunders, rolls the ocean, groans the ground.
 All night it rag'd; when morning rose, to land
 We haul'd our bark, and moor'd it on the strand,
 Where in a beauteous grotto's cool recess
 Dance the green Nereids of the neighb'ring seas.

There, while the wild winds whistled o'er the main,
 Thus careful I address'd the list'ning train.

O friends, be wise! nor dare the flocks destroy
 Of these fair pastures: If ye touch, ye die.
 Warn'd by the high command of heav'n, be aw'd;
 Holy the flocks, and dreadful is the god!
 That god who spreads the radiant beams of light,
 And views wide earth and heav'n's unmeasur'd height.

And now the moon had run her monthly round,
 The south-east blust'ring with a dreadful sound;
 Unhurt the beeves, untouch'd the woolly train
 Low through the grove, or range the flow'ry plain:
 Then fail'd our food; then fish we make our prey,
 Or fowl that screaming haunt the wat'ry way.
 Till now from sea or flood no succour found,
 Famine and meagre want besieg'd us round.
 Pensive and pale from grove to grove I stray'd,
 From the loud storms to find a sylvan shade;
 There o'er my hands the living wave I pour,
 And heav'n and heav'n's immortal thrones adore,
 To calm the roarings of the stormy main,
 And grant me peaceful to my realms again.
 Then o'er my eyes the gods soft slumber shed,
 While thus Eurylochus arising said.

O friends! a thousand ways frail mortals lead
 To the cold tomb, and dreadful all to tread;

But dreadful most, when, by a slow decay,
 Pale hunger wastes the manly strength away.
 Why cease ye then t' implore the pow'rs above,
 And offer hecatombs to thund'ring Jove?
 Why seize ye not yon beeves and fleecy prey?
 Arise unanimous; arise and slay!
 And if the gods ordain a safe return,
 To Phoebus shrines shall rise, and altars burn.
 But, should the pow'rs that o'er mankind preside,
 Decree to plunge us in the whelming tide,
 Better to rush at once to shades below,
 Than linger life away, and nourish woe!

Thus he: The beeves around securely stray,
 When swift to ruin they invade the prey:
 They seize; they kill!—but for the rite divine,
 The barley fail'd, and for libations, wine.
 Swift from the oak they strip the shady pride,
 And verdant leaves the flow'ry cake supply'd.

With pray'r they now address'd th' aetherial train,
 Slay the selected beeves, and flea the slain:
 The thighs, with fat involv'd, divide with art,
 Strew'd o'er with morsels cut from ev'ry part.
 Water, instead of wine, is brought in urns,
 And pour'd profanely as the victim burns.
 The thighs thus offer'd, and the intrails drest,
 They roast the fragments, and prepare the feast.

'Twas then soft slumber fled my troubled brain;
 Back to the bark I speed along the main.
 When lo! an odour from the feast exhales,
 Spreads o'er the coast, and scents the tainted gales;
 A chilly fear congeal'd my vital blood,
 And thus, obteffing heav'n, I mourn'd aloud.

O fire of men and gods, immortal Jove!
 Oh all ye blefsful pow'rs that reign above!
 Why were my cares beguil'd in fhort repofe?

O fatal flumber, paid with lafting woes!
 A deed fo dreadful all the gods alarms,
 Vengeance is on the wing, and heav'n in arms!

Meantime Lampetie mounts th' aerial way,
 And kindles into rage the god of day.

Vengeance, ye pow'rs, (he cries), and thou whose
 hand

Aims the red bolt, and hurls the writhen brand!
 Slain are thofe herds which I with pride furvey,
 When thro' the ports of heav'n I pour the day,
 Or deep in ocean plunge the burning ray.

Vengeance, ye gods! or I the fkies forego,
 And bear the lamp of heav'n to fhades below.

To whom the thund'ring pow'r: O fource of day,
 Whofe radiant lamp adorns the azure way,
 Still may thy beams thro' heav'n's bright portals rife,
 The joy of earth, and glory of the fkies:
 Lo! my red arm I bare, my thunders guide
 To dafh th' offenders in the whelming tide.

To fair Calypfo, from the bright abodes,
 Hermes convey'd thefe councils of the gods.

Meantime from man to man my tongue exclaims,
 My wrath is kindled, and my foul in flames.
 In vain! I view perform'd the direful deed,
 Beeves, flain by heaps, along the ocean bleed.

Now heav'n gave figns of wrath; along the ground
 Crept the raw hides, and with a bellowing found
 Roar'd the dead limbs; the burning entrails groan'd.

Six guilty days my wretched mates employ
 In impious feasting, and unhallow'd joy ;
 The seventh arose, and now the fire of gods
 Rein'd the rough storms, and calm'd the tossing floods :
 With speed the bark we climb ; the spacious sails
 Loos'd from the yards invite th' impelling gales.
 Past sight of shore, along the surge we bound,
 And all above is sky, and ocean all around !
 When lo ! a murky cloud the Thund'rer forms
 Full o'er our heads, and blackens heav'n with storms.
 Night dwells o'er all the deep : And now outflies
 The gloomy west, and whistles in the skies.
 The mountain-billows roar : The furious blast
 Howls o'er the shroud, and rends it from the mast :
 The mast gives way, and, crackling as it bends,
 Tears up the deck ; then all at once descends :
 The pilot by the tumbling ruin slain,
 Dash'd from the helm, falls headlong in the main.
 Then Jove in anger bids his thunders roll,
 And forked lightnings flash from pole to pole.
 Fierce at our heads his deadly bolt he aims,
 Red with uncommon wrath, and wrapt in flames :
 Full on the bark it fell ; now high, now low,
 Toss'd and retoss'd, it reel'd beneath the blow ;
 At once into the main the crew it shook :
 Sulphureous odours rose, and smould'ring smoke.
 Like fowl that haunt the floods, they sink, they rise,
 Now lost, now seen, with shrieks, and dreadful cries ;
 And strive to gain the bark ; but Jove denies. }
 Firm at the helm I stand, when fierce the main
 Rush'd with dire noise, and dash'd the sides in twain ;

Again impetuous drove the furious blast,
 Snapt the strong helm, and bore to sea the mast.
 Firm to the mast with chords the helm I bind,
 And ride aloft, to providence resign'd,
 Through tumbling billows, and a war of wind.

Now sunk the west, and now a southern breeze,
 More dreadful than the tempest, lash'd the seas;
 For on the rocks it bore where Scylla raves,
 And dire Charybdis rolls her thund'ring waves.
 All night I drove; and, at the dawn of day,
 Fast by the rocks beheld the desp'rate way:
 Just when the sea within her gulf subsides,
 And in the roaring whirlpools rush the tides.
 Swift from the float I vaulted with a bound,
 The lofty fig-tree seiz'd, and clung around.
 So to the beam the bat tenacious clings,
 And pendent round it clasps his leathern wings.
 High in the air the tree its boughs display'd,
 And o'er the dungeon cast a dreadful shade;
 All unsustain'd between the wave and sky,
 Beneath my feet the whirling billows fly.
 What time the judge forsakes the noisy bar
 To take repast, and stills the wordy war;
 Charybdis rumbling from her inmost caves,
 The mast refunded on her reflux waves.
 Swift from the tree, the floating mast to gain,
 Sudden I dropp'd amidst the flashing main;
 Once more undaunted on the ruin rode,
 And oar'd with lab'ring arms along the flood.
 Unseen I pass'd by Scylla's dire abodes:
 So Jove decreed, (dread fire of men and gods).

Then nine long days I plough'd the calmer seas,
Heav'd by the surge, and wafted by the breeze.
Weary and wet th' Ogygian shores I gain,
When the tenth sun descended to the main.
There in Calypso's ever-fragrant bow'rs
Refresh'd I lay, and joy beguil'd the hours.

My following fates to thee, oh king! are known,
And the bright partner of thy royal throne.
Enough: In misery can words avail?
And what so tedious as a twice-told tale?

T H E

O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K XIII.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The Arrival of Ulysses in Ithaca.

ULYSSES takes his leave of Alcinous and Arete, and embarks in the evening. Next morning the ship arrives at Ithaca; where the sailors, as Ulysses is yet sleeping, lay him on the shore with all his treasures. On their return, Neptune changes their ship into a rock. In the mean time, Ulysses awaking, knows not his native Ithaca, by reason of a mist which Pallas had cast round him. He breaks into loud lamentations; till the goddess appearing to him in the form of a shepherd, discovers the country to him, and points out the particular places. He then tells a feigned story of his adventures; upon which she manifests herself, and they consult together of the measures to be taken to destroy the suitors. To conceal his return, and disguise his person the more effectually, she changes him into the figure of an old beggar.

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The return of Ulysses to Ithaca.

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his return, and disguise his person the more effectually,
he changes him into the figure of an old beggar.

B O O K XIII.

HE ceas'd ; but left so pleasing on their ear
His voice, that list'ning still they seem'd to hear.

A pause of silence hush'd the shady rooms :

The grateful conf'rence then the king resumes.

Whatever toils the great Ulysses past,

Beneath this happy roof they end at last ;

No longer now from shore to shore to roam,

Smooth seas, and gentle winds, invite him home.

But hear me, princes ! whom these walls inclose,

For whom my chanter sings, and goblet flows

With wines unmix'd, (an honour due to age,

To cheer the grave, and warm the poet's rage.)

Though labour'd gold and many a dazzling vest

Lie heap'd already for our godlike guest ;

Without new treasures let him not remove,

Large, and expressive of the public love :

Each peer a tripod, each a vase bestow,

A gen'ral tribute, which the state shall owe.

This sentence pleas'd : Then all their steps address
To separate mansions, and retir'd to rest.

Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,

And shed her sacred light along the skies.

Down to the haven and the ships in haste

They bore the treasures, and in safety plac'd.

The king himself the vases rang'd with care ;

Then bad his followers to the feast repair.

A victim ox beneath the sacred hand

Of great Alcinous falls, and stains the sand.

To Jove th' eternal (pow'r above all pow'rs!
 Who wings the winds, and darkens heav'n with show'rs)
 The flames ascend: Till ev'ning they prolong
 The rites, more sacred made by heav'nly song:
 For in the midst, with public honours grac'd,
 Thy lyre divine, Demodocus! was plac'd.
 All, but Ulysses, heard with fix'd delight:
 He sat, and ey'd the sun, and wish'd the night;
 Slow seem'd the sun to move, the hours to roll,
 His native home deep imagin'd in his soul.
 As the tir'd ploughman spent with stubborn toil,
 Whose oxen long have torn the furrow'd soil,
 Sees with delight the sun's declining ray,
 When home, with feeble knees, he bends his way
 To late repast, (the day's hard labour done):
 So to Ulysses welcome set the sun.
 Then instant, to Alcinous and the rest,
 (The Scherian states), he turn'd, and thus address'd.

O thou, the first in merit and command!
 And you the peers and princes of the land!
 May ev'ry joy be yours! nor this the least,
 When due libation shall have crown'd the feast,
 Safe to my home to send your happy guest. }
 Complete are now the bounties you have given,
 Be all those bounties but confirm'd by heav'n!
 So may I find, when all my wand'rings cease,
 My consort blameless, and my friends in peace.
 On you be ev'ry bless; and ev'ry day,
 In home-felt joys delighted, roll away;
 Yourself, your wives, your long descending race,
 May ev'ry god enrich with ev'ry grace!

Sure fix'd on virtue may your nation stand,
And public evil never touch the land!

His words well weigh'd, the gen'ral voice approv'd.
Benign, and instant his dismissal mov'd.
The monarch to Pontonous gave the sign,
To fill the goblet high with rosy wine :
Great Jove the father first (he cry'd) implore ;
Then send the stranger to his native shore.

The luscious wine th' obedient herald brought ;
Around the mansion flow'd the purple draught :
Each from his seat to each immortal pours,
Whom glory circles in th' Olympian bow'rs.
Ulysses sole with air majestic stands,
The bowl presenting to Arete's hands ;
Then thus : O queen, farewell! be still possess'd
Of dear remembrance, blessing still and blest'd!
Till age and death shall gently call thee hence,
(Sure fate of ev'ry mortal excellence!)
Farewell! and joys successive ever spring
To thee, to thine, the people, and the king!

Thus he : Then parting prints the sandy shore
To the fair port : A herald march'd before,
Sent by Alcinous : Of Arete's train
Three chosen maids attend him to the main ;
This does a tunic and white vest convey,
A various casket that, of rich inlay,
And bread and wine the third. The chearful mates
Safe in the hollow poop dispose the cates :
Upon the deck, soft painted robes they spread,
With linen cover'd, for the hero's bed.
He climb'd the lofty stern ; then gently prest
The swelling couch, and lay compos'd to rest.

Now plac'd in order, the Phæacian train
 Their cables loose, and launch into the main :
 At once they bend, and strike their equal oars,
 And leave the sinking hills, and less'ning shores.
 While on the deck the chief in silence lies,
 And pleasing slumbers steal upon his eyes.
 As fiery courfers in the rapid race,
 Urg'd by fierce drivers through the dusty space,
 Toss their high heads, and scour along the plain ;
 So mounts the bounding vessel o'er the main.
 Back to the stern the parted billows flow,
 And the black ocean foams and roars below.

Thus with spread sails the winged galley flies ;
 Less swift an eagle cuts the liquid skies :
 Divine Ulysses was her sacred load,
 A man, in wisdom equal to a god !
 Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,
 In storms by sea, and combats on the shore ;
 All which soft sleep now banish'd from his breast,
 Wrapp'd in a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.

But when the morning-star with early ray
 Flam'd in the front of heav'n, and promis'd day,
 Like distant clouds the mariner descries
 Fair Ithaca's emerging hills arise.
 Far from the town a spacious port appears,
 Sacred to Phorcys' pow'r, whose name it bears :
 Two craggy rocks projecting to the main,
 The roaring winds tempestuous rage restrain ;
 Within, the waves in softer murmurs glide,
 And ships secure without their halbers ride.
 High at the head a branching olive grows,
 And crowns the pointed cliffs with shady boughs.

Beneath, a gloomy grotto's cool recess
 Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring seas;
 Where bowls and urns were form'd of living stone,
 And massy beams in native marble shone;
 On which the labours of the nymph were roll'd,
 Their webs divine of purple mix'd with gold,
 Within the cave, the clust'ring bees attend
 Their waxen works, or from the roof depend
 Perpetual waters o'er the pavement glide;
 Two marble doors unfold on either side;
 Sacred the south by which the gods descend,
 But mortals enter at the northern end.

Thither they bent, and haul'd their ship to land;
 (The crooked keel divides the yellow sand).
 Ulysses sleeping on his couch they bore,
 And gently plac'd him on the rocky shore.
 His treasures next, Alcinous' gifts, they laid
 In the wild olive's unfrequented shade,
 Secure from theft: Then launch'd the bark again,
 Resum'd their oars, and measur'd back the main.
 Nor yet forgot old Ocean's dread supreme,
 The vengeance vow'd for eyeless Polypheme.
 Before the throne of mighty Jove he stood;
 And sought the secret counsels of the god.

Shall then no more, O sire of gods! be mine
 The rights and honours of a pow'r divine?
 Scorn'd ev'n by man, and (oh severe disgrace!)
 By soft Phæacians, my degen'rate race!
 Against yon destin'd head in vain I swore,
 And menac'd vengeance, ere he reach'd his shore:
 To reach his natal shore was thy decree;
 Mild I obey'd, for who shall war with thee?

Behold him landed, careless and asleep,
 From all th' eluded dangers of the deep!
 Lo where he lies, amidst a shining store
 Of brass, rich garments, and refulgent ore:
 And bears triumphant to his native isle
 A prize more worth than Ilion's noble spoil.

To whom the father of th' immortal pow'rs,
 Who swells the clouds, and gladdens earth with show'rs:
 Can mighty Neptune thus of man complain?
 Neptune, tremendous o'er the boundless main!
 Rever'd and awful ev'n in heav'n's abodes,
 Ancient and great! a god above the gods!
 If that low race offend thy pow'r divine,
 (Weak, daring creatures!) is not vengeance thine?
 Go then, the guilty at thy will chastise.
 He said: The shaker of the earth replies.

This then I doom; to fix the gallant ship
 A mark of vengeance on the fable deep;
 To warn the thoughtless self-confiding train,
 No more unlicens'd thus to brave the main.
 Full in their port a shady hill shall rise,
 If such thy will.——We will it, Jove replies.
 Ev'n when with transport black'ning all the strand,
 The swarming people hail their ship to land,
 Fix her forever, a memorial stone:
 Still let her seem to sail, and seem alone;
 The trembling crouds shall see the sudden shade
 Of whelming mountains overhang their head!

With that, the god whose earthquakes rock the ground,
 Fierce to Phaeacia cross'd the vast profound.
 Swift as a swallow sweeps the liquid way,
 The winged pinnace shot along the sea.

The god attests her with a sudden stroke,
 And roots her down an everlasting rock.
 Aghast the Scherians stand in deep surprise;
 All press to speak, all question with their eyes.
 What hands unseen the rapid bark restrain!
 And yet it swims, or seems to swim the main!
 Thus they, unconscious of the deed divine:
 'Till great Alcinous rising own'd the sign.

Behold the long destin'd day! (he cries),
 Oh certain faith of antient prophecies!
 These ears have heard my royal fire disclose
 A dreadful story, big with future woes;
 How mov'd with wrath, that careless we convey
 Promiscuous ev'ry guest to ev'ry bay,
 Stern Neptune rag'd; and how by his command
 Firm rooted in the surge a ship should stand;
 (A monument of wrath!) and mound on mound
 Should hide our walls, or whelm beneath the ground.

The fates have follow'd as declar'd the seer.
 Be humbled, nations! and your monarch hear.
 No more unlicens'd brave the deeps, no more
 With ev'ry stranger pass from shore to shore;
 On angry Neptune now for mercy call:
 To his high name let twelve black oxen fall.
 So may the god reverse his purpos'd will,
 Nor o'er our city hang the dreadful hill.

The monarch spoke: They trembled and obey'd,
 Forth on the sands the victim oxen led:
 The gather'd tribes before the altars stand,
 And chiefs and rulers, a majestic band.
 The king of Ocean all the tribes implore;
 The blazing altars redden all the shore.

Meanwhile Ulysses in his country lay,
 Releas'd from sleep, and round him might survey }
 The solitary shore, and rolling sea.
 Yet had his mind through tedious absence lost
 The dear remembrance of his native coast;
 Besides, Minerva, to secure her care,
 Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air:
 For so the gods ordain'd, to keep unseen
 His royal person from his friends and queen,
 Till the proud suitors for their crimes afford
 An ample vengeance to their injur'd lord.

Now all the land another prospect bore,
 Another port appear'd, another shore,
 And long-continu'd ways, and winding floods,
 And unknown mountains, crown'd with unknown-
 woods.

Pensive and slow, with sudden grief oppress'd,
 The king arose, and beat his careful breast,
 Cast a long look o'er all the coast and main,
 And sought, around, his native realm in vain:
 Then with erected eyes stood fix'd in wo,
 And as he spoke, the tears began to flow.

Ye gods! (he cry'd), upon what barren coast,
 In what new region is Ulysses tost?
 Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
 Or men whose bosom tender pity warms?
 Where shall this treasure now in safety lie?
 And whither, whither its sad owner fly?
 Ah why did I Alcinous' grace implore?
 Ah why forsake Phaeacia's happy shore?
 Some juster prince perhaps had entertain'd,
 And safe restor'd me to my native land.

Is this the promis'd, long-expected coast,
 And this the faith Phaeacia's rulers boast?
 Oh righteous gods! of all the great, how few
 Are just to heav'n, and to their promise true!
 But he, the pow'r to whose all-seeing eyes
 The deeds of men appear without disguise,
 'Tis his alone t' avenge the wrongs I bear:
 For still th' oppress'd are his peculiar care.

To count these presents, and from thence to prove
 Their faith, is mine: The rest belongs to Jove.

Then on the sands he rang'd his wealthy store,
 The gold, the vests, the tripods, number'd o'er:
 All these he found, but still in error lost.

Disconsolate he wanders on the coast,
 Sighs for his country, and laments again
 To the deaf rocks, and hoarse-refounding main.

When lo! the guardian goddess of the wise,
 Celestial Pallas, stood before his eyes;

In show a youthful swain, of form divine,
 Who seem'd descended from some princely line,

A graceful robe her slender body drest,
 Around her shoulders flew the waving vest,

Her decent hand a shining jav'lin bore,

And painted sandals on her feet she wore.

To whom the King: Whoe'er of human race

Thou art, that wander'st in this desert place!

With joy to thee, as to some god, I bend;

To thee my treasures and myself commend.

O tell a wretch in exile doom'd to stray,

What air I breathe, what country I survey?

The fruitful continent's extremest bound,

Or some fair isle which Neptune's arms surround?

From what fair clime (said she) remote from fame,
 Arriv'st thou here a stranger to our name?
 Thou seest an island, not to those unknown
 Whose hills are brighten'd by the rising sun,
 Nor those that plac'd beneath his utmost reign
 Behold him sinking in the western main.
 The rugged soil allows no level space
 For flying chariots, or the rapid race;
 Yet not ungrateful to the peasant's pain,
 Suffices fulness to the swelling grain:
 The loaded trees their various fruits produce,
 And ciust'ring grapes afford a gen'rous juice:
 Woods crown our mountains, and in ev'ry grove
 The bounding goats and frisking heifers rove:
 Soft rains and kindly dews refresh the field,
 And rising springs eternal verdure yield.
 Ev'n to those shores is Ithaca renown'd,
 Where Troy's majestic ruins strow the ground.

At this, the chief with transport was possess'd,
 His panting heart exulted in his breast:
 Yet well dissembling his untimely joys,
 And veiling truth in plausible disguise,
 Thus, with an air sincere, in fiction bold,
 His ready tale th' inventive hero told.

Oft have I heard, in Crete, this island's name;
 For 'twas from Crete, my native soil, I came,
 Self-banish'd thence. I sail'd before the wind,
 And left my children and my friends behind.
 From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,
 Whose son, the swift Orsilochus, I slew:
 (With brutal force he seiz'd my Trojan prey,
 Due to the toils of many a bloody day).

Unseen I 'scap'd ; and, favour'd by the night,
 In a Phoenician vessel took my flight,
 For Pyle or Elis bound ; but tempests tost,
 And raging billows drove us on your coast.
 In dead of night an unknown port we gain'd,
 Spent with fatigue, and slept secure on land.
 But e'er the rosy morn renew'd the day,
 While in th' embrace of pleasing sleep I lay,
 Sudden, invited by auspicious gales,
 They land my goods, and hoist their flying sails.
 Abandon'd here, my fortune I deplore,
 A hapless exile on a foreign shore.

Thus while he spoke, the blue-ey'd maid began
 With pleasing smiles to view the godlike man :
 Then chang'd her form ; and now, divinely bright,
 Jove's heav'nly daughter stood confess'd to sight,
 Like a fair virgin in her beauty's bloom,
 Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.

O still the same Ulysses ! she rejoin'd,
 In useful craft successfully refin'd !
 Artful in speech, in action, and in mind !
 Suffic'd it not, that thy long labours past,
 Secure thou seest thy native shore at last ?
 But this to me ? who, like thyself, excel
 In arts of counsel, and dissembling well ;
 To me, whose wit exceeds the pow'rs divine,
 No less than mortals are surpass'd by thine.
 Know'st thou not me ? who made thy life my care,
 Thro' ten years wand'ring, and thro' ten years war ;
 Who taught thee arts Alcinous to persuade,
 To raise his wonder, and engage his aid ;

And now appear, thy treasures to protect,
 Conceal thy person, thy designs direct,
 And tell what more thou must from fate expect.
 Domestic woes far heavier to be born!
 The pride of fools, and slaves insulting scorn.
 But thou be silent, nor reveal thy state:
 Yield to the force of unresisted fate,
 And bear unmov'd the wrongs of base mankind,
 The last and hardest conquest of the mind.

Goddeſs of wiſdom! Ithacus replies,
 He who diſcerns thee muſt be truly wiſe,
 So ſeldom view'd, and ever in diſguiſe!
 When the bold Argives led their warring pow'rs
 Againſt proud Ilion's well-defended tow'rs,
 Ulyſſes was thy care, celeftial maid!
 Grac'd with thy ſight, and favour'd with thy aid.
 But when the Trojan piles in aſhes lay,
 And bound for Greece we plough'd the wat'ry way,
 Our fleet diſpers'd, and driv'n from coaſt to coaſt,
 Thy ſacred preſence from that hour I loſt;
 Till I beheld thy radiant form once more,
 And heard thy counſels on Phaeacia's ſhore.
 But, by th' almighty author of thy race,
 Tell me, oh tell! is this my native place?
 For much I fear, long tracks of land and ſea
 Divide this coaſt from diſtant Ithaca;
 The ſweet deluſion kindly you impoſe,
 To ſooth my hopes, and mitigate my woes.

Thus he. The blue-ey'd goddeſs thus replies.
 How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wiſe!
 Who, vers'd in fortune, fear the flatt'ring ſhow,
 And taſte not half the bliſs the gods beſtow.

The more shall Pallas aid thy just desires,
 And guard the wisdom which herself inspires.
 Others, long absent from their native place,
 Strait seek their home, and fly with eager pace
 To their wives arms, and children's dear embrace:
 Not thus Ulysses; he decrees to prove
 His subjects faith, and queen's suspected love;
 Who mourn'd her lord twice ten revolving years,
 And wastes the days in grief, the nights in tears.
 But Pallas knew, (thy friends and navy lost),
 Once more 'twas giv'n thee to behold thy coast:
 Yet how could I with adverse fate engage,
 And mighty Neptune's unrelenting rage?
 Now lift thy longing eyes, while I restore
 The pleasing prospect of thy native shore.
 Behold the port of Phorcys! fenc'd around
 With rocky mountains, and with olives crown'd.
 Behold the gloomy grot! whose cool recess
 Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring seas:
 Whose now-neglected altars, in thy reign
 Blush'd with the blood of sheep and oxen slain.
 Behold! where Neritus the clouds divides,
 And shakes the waving forests on his sides.

So spake the goddess, and the prospect clear'd,
 The mists dispers'd, and all the coast appear'd.
 The king with joy confess'd his place of birth,
 And on his knees salutes his mother Earth:
 Then with his suppliant hands upheld in air,
 Thus to the sea-green sisters sends his pray'r.

All hail! ye virgin-daughters of the main!
 Ye streams, beyond my hopes beheld again!

To you once more your own Ulysses bows;
 Attend his transports, and receive his vows!
 If Jove prolong my days, and Pallas crown
 The growing virtues of my youthful son,
 To you shall rites divine be ever paid,
 And grateful off'rings on your altars laid.

Then thus Minerva: From that anxious breast
 Dismiss those cares, and leave to heav'n the rest.
 Our task be now thy treasur'd stores to save,
 Deep in the close recesses of the cave:
 Then future means consult.—She spoke, and trod
 The shady grot, that brighten'd with the god.
 The closest caverns of the grot she sought;
 The gold, the brass, the robes Ulysses brought;
 These in the secret gloom the chief dispos'd;
 The entrance with a rock the goddess clos'd.

Now, seated in the olive's sacred shade,
 Confer the hero and the martial maid.
 The goddess of the azure eyes began:
 Son of Laertes! much-experienc'd man!
 The suitor-train thy earliest care demand,
 Of that luxurious race to rid the land:
 Three years thy house their lawless rule has seen,
 And proud addresses to the matchless queen,
 But she thy absence mourns from day to day,
 And inly bleeds, and silent wastes away:
 Elusive of the bridal hour, she gives
 Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.

To this Ulysses: Oh celestial maid!
 Prais'd be thy counsel, and thy timely aid;
 Else had I seen my native walls in vain,
 Like great Atrides just restor'd and slain.

Vouchsafe the means of vengeance to debate,
 And plan with all thy arts the scene of fate.
 Then, then be present, and my soul inspire,
 As when we wrapt Troy's heav'n-built walls in fire,
 Though leagu'd against me hundred heroes stand,
 Hundreds shall fall, if Pallas aid my hand.

She answer'd : In the dreadful day of fight
 Know I am with thee, strong in all my might.
 If thou but equal to thyself be found,
 What gasping numbers then shall press the ground !
 What human victims stain the feastful floor !
 How wide the pavements float with guilty gore !
 It fits thee now to wear a dark disguise,
 And secret walk, unknown to mortal eyes.
 For this, my hand shall wither ev'ry grace,
 And ev'ry elegance of form and face ;
 O'er thy smooth skin a bark of wrinkles spread,
 Turn hoar the auburn honours of thy head,
 Disfigure ev'ry limb with coarse attire,
 And in thy eyes extinguish all the fire ;
 Add all the wants and the decays of life,
 Estrange thee from thy own, thy son, thy wife :
 From the loath'd object ev'ry sight shall turn,
 And the blind suitors their destruction scorn.

Go first the master of thy herds to find,
 True to his charge, a loyal swain and kind :
 For thee he sighs ; and to the royal heir
 And chaste Penelope extends his care.
 At the Coracian rock he now resides,
 Where Arethusa's fable water glides ;
 The fable water and the copious mast
 Swell the fat herd ; luxuriant, large repast !

With him rest peaceful in the rural cell,
 And all you ask his faithful tongue shall tell.
 Me into other realms my cares convey,
 To Sparta, still with female beauty gay :
 For know, to Sparta thy lov'd offspring came,
 To learn thy fortunes from the voice of fame.

At this the father, with a father's care :
 Must he too suffer ? he, oh goddess ! bear
 Of wand'rings and of woes a wretched share ?
 Through the wild ocean plough the dang'rous way,
 And leave his fortunes and his house a prey ?
 Why wouldst not thou, oh all-enlighten'd mind !
 Inform him certain, and protect him, kind ?

To whom Minerva : Be thy soul at rest ;
 And know, whatever heav'n ordains, is best,
 To fame I sent him, to acquire renown :
 To other regions is his virtue known.
 Secure he sits, near great Atrides plac'd ;
 With friendships strengthen'd, and with honours
 grac'd.

But lo ! an ambush waits his passage o'er :
 Fierce foes insidious intercept the shore :
 In vain ! far sooner all the murd'rous brood
 This injur'd land shall fatten with their blood.

She spake : Then touch'd him with her pow'rful
 wand :

The skin shrunk up, and wither'd at her hand :
 A swift old age o'er all his members spread ;
 A sudden frost was sprinkled on his head ;
 Nor longer in the heavy eye-ball shin'd
 The glance divine, forth-beaming from the mind.

His robe, which spots indelible besmear,
In rags dishonest flutters with the air :
A stag's torn hide is lapt around his reins ;
A rugged staff his trembling hand sustains ;
And at his side a wretched scrip was hung,
Wide-patch'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.
So look'd the chief, so mov'd ! to mortal eyes
Object uncouth ! a man of miseries !
While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air,
To Sparta flies, Telemachus her care.

This robe, which thou indolent hast worn,
 In rage divine I fling with thee away;
 A flag's torn hide is fast around I fling;
 A ragged staff I trembling hand I fling;
 And at his side a wretched tarp I fling;
 Wide-patch'd, and knotted to a twisted string;
 So look'd the chief, so mov'd! so mortal eyes
 Object uncount'd a mass of misery;
 While Pallas, claving the wide folds of air,
 To Sparta flies, I Lemnae her care.

And now, O Pallas, thou that art so kind,
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;

And now, O Pallas, thou that art so kind,
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;

And now, O Pallas, thou that art so kind,
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;

And now, O Pallas, thou that art so kind,
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;
 To me, thy friend, thy friend, thy friend;

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Conversation with Eumaeus.

ULYSSES arrives in disguise at the house of Eumaeus, where he is received, entertained, and lodged, with the utmost hospitality. The several discourses of that faithful old servant, with the feigned story told by Ulysses to conceal himself, and other conversations on various subjects, take up this entire book.

B O O K XIV.

BUT he, deep-musing, o'er the mountains stray'd
 Through mazy thickets of the woodland shade,
 And cavern'd ways, the shaggy coast along,
 With cliffs and nodding forests overhung.
 Eumaeus at his sylvan lodge he sought,
 A faithful servant, and without a fault.
 Ulysses found him busied, as he sat
 Before the threshold of his rustic gate.
 Around the mansion in a circle shone
 A rural portico of rugged stone :
 (In absence of his lord, with honest toil
 His own industrious hands had rais'd the pile) :
 The wall was stone from neighb'ring quarries born,
 Encircled with a fence of native thorn,
 And strong with pales, by many a weary stroke
 Of stubborn labour hewn from heart of oak,
 Frequent and thick. Within the space were rear'd
 Twelve ample cells, the lodgements of his herd.
 Full fifty pregnant females each contain'd ;
 The males without (a smaller race) remain'd ;
 Doom'd to supply the suitors wasteful feast,
 A stock by daily luxury decreast ;
 Now scarce four hundred left. These to defend,
 Four savage dogs, a watchful guard, attend.
 Here sat Eumaeus, and his cares apply'd
 To form strong buskins of well-season'd hide.
 Of four assistants who his labour share,
 Three now were absent on the rural care ;

The fourth drove victims to the suitor-train :
 But he, of ancient faith, a simple swain,
 Sigh'd, while he furnish'd the luxurious board,
 And weary'd heav'n with wishes for his lord.

Soon as Ulysses near th' inclosure drew,
 With open mouths the furious mastiffs flew :
 Down sat the sage ; and, cautious to withstand,
 Let fall th' offensive truncheon from his hand.
 Sudden the master runs ; aloud he calls ;
 And from his hasty hand the leather falls :
 With show'rs of stones he drives them far away ;
 The scatt'ring dogs around at distance bay.

Unhappy stranger ! (thus the faithful swain
 Began with accent gracious and humane),
 What sorrow had been mine, if at my gate
 Thy rev'rend age had met a shameful fate ?
 Enough of woes already have I known ;
 Enough my master's sorrows and my own.
 While here (ungrateful task !) his herds I feed,
 Ordain'd for lawless rioters to bleed ;
 Perhaps supported at another's board,
 Far from his country roams my hapless lord !
 Or sigh'd in exile forth his latest breath,
 Now cover'd with th' eternal shade of death !

But enter this my homely roof, and see
 Our woods not void of hospitality.
 Then tell me whence thou art, and what the share
 Of woes and wand'rings thou wert born to bear ?

He said ; and seconding the kind request,
 With friendly step precedes his unknown guest.
 A shaggy goat's soft hide beneath him spread,
 And with fresh rushes heap'd an ample bed.

Joy touch'd the hero's tender soul, to find
 So just reception from a heart so kind :
 And oh, ye gods ! with all your blessings grace
 (He thus broke forth) this friend of human race !

The swain reply'd : It never was our guise
 To slight the poor, or aught humane despise.
 For Jove unfolds our hospitable door ;
 'Tis Jove that sends the stranger and the poor.
 Little, alas ! is all the good I can ;
 A man oppress'd, dependent, yet a man :
 Accept such treatment as a swain affords,
 Slave to the insolence of youthful lords !
 Far hence is by unequal gods remov'd
 That man of bounties, loving and belov'd !
 To whom whate'er his slave enjoys is ow'd ;
 And more, had fate allow'd, had been bestow'd :
 But fate condemn'd him to a foreign shore ;
 Much have I sorrow'd, but my master more.
 Now cold he lies, to death's embrace resign'd :
 Ah perish Helen ! perish all her kind !
 For whose curs'd cause, in Agamemnon's name,
 He trod so fatally the paths of fame.

His vest succinct then girding round his waste,
 Forth rush'd the swain with hospitable haste,
 Strait to the lodgements of his herd he run,
 Where the fat porkers slept beneath the sun :
 Of two his cutlance lanc'd the spouting blood ;
 These quarter'd, sing'd, and fix'd on forks of wood ;
 All hasty on the hissing coals he threw ;
 And smoking back the tasteful viands drew,
 Broachers and all ; then on the board display'd
 The ready meal, before Ulysses laid

With flour imbrown'd ; next mingled wine yet new,
 And luscious as the bees nectarious dew :
 Then sat companion of the friendly feast,
 With open look ; and thus bespoke his guest.

Take with free welcome what our hands prepare,
 Such food as falls to simple servants share :
 The best our lords consume ; those thoughtless peers,
 Rich without bounty, guilty without fears !
 Yet sure the gods their impious acts detest,
 And honour justice and the righteous breast.
 Pirates and conquerors, of harden'd mind,
 The foes of peace and scourges of mankind,
 To whom offending men are made a prey,
 When Jove in vengeance gives a land away ;
 Ev'n these, when of their ill-got spoils possess'd,
 Find sure tormentors in the guilty breast ;
 Some voice of God close whisp'ring from within,
 " Wretch ! this is villainy, and this is sin."
 But these, no doubt, some oracle explore,
 That tells, the great Ulysses is no more.
 Hence springs their confidence, and from our sighs
 Their rapine strengthens, and their riots rise :
 Constant as Jove the night and day bestows,
 Bleeds a whole hecatomb, a vintage flows.
 None match'd this hero's wealth, of all who reign
 O'er the fair islands of the neighb'ring main.
 Nor all the monarchs whose far-dreaded sway
 The wide-extended continents obey :
 First, on the main-land, of Ulysses' breed,
 Twelve herds, twelve flocks, on ocean's margin feed ;
 As many stalls for shaggy goats are rear'd ;
 As many lodgements for the tusky herd ;

Those foreign keepers guard : And here are seen
 Twelve herds of goats that graze our utmost green ;
 To native pastors is their charge assign'd,
 And mine the care to feed the bristly kind :
 Each day the fattest bleeds of either herd,
 All to the suitors wasteful board preferr'd.

Thus he, benevolent : His unknown guest
 With hunger keen devours the fav'ry feast ;
 While schemes of vengeance ripen in his breast.
 Silent and thoughtful while the board he ey'd,
 Eumaeus pours on high the purple tide ;
 The king with smiling looks his joy express'd,
 And thus the kind inviting host address'd.

Say now, what man is he, the man deplor'd,
 So rich, so potent, whom you stile your Lord ;
 Late with such affluence and possessions blest,
 And now in honour's glorious bed at rest ?
 Whoever was the warrior, he must be
 To fame no stranger, nor perhaps to me ;
 Who (so the gods and so the fates ordain'd)
 Have wander'd many a sea, and many a land.

Small is the faith the prince and queen ascribe
 (Reply'd Eumaeus) to the wand'ring tribe :
 For needy strangers still to flatt'ry fly,
 And want too oft betrays the tongue to lie.
 Each vagrant traveller that touches here,
 Deludes with fallacies the royal ear,
 To dear remembrance makes his image rise,
 And calls the springing sorrows from her eyes.
 Such thou mayst be. But he whose name you crave
 Moulders on earth, or welters on the wave,

Or food for fish, or dogs, his reliques lie,
 Or torn by birds are scatter'd through the sky.
 So perish'd he ; and left (for ever lost)
 Much wo to all, but sure to me the most.
 So mild a master never shall I find :
 Less dear the parents whom I left behind,
 Less soft my mother, less my father kind. }
 Not with such transport would my eyes run o'er,
 Again to hail them in their native shore,
 As lov'd Ulysses once more to embrace,
 Restor'd and breathing in his natal place.
 That name, for ever dread, yet ever dear,
 Ev'n in his absence I pronounce with fear :
 In my respect he bears a prince's part,
 But lives a very brother in my heart.

Thus spoke the faithful swain ; and thus rejoin'd
 The master of his grief, the man of patient mind.
 Ulysses, friend ! shall view his old abodes,
 (Distrustful as thou art), nor doubt the gods.
 Nor speak I rashly, but with faith averr'd,
 And what I speak attesting heav'n has heard.
 If so, a cloak and vesture be my meed :
 Till his return no title shall I plead, }
 Though certain be my news, and great my need.
 Whom want itself can force untruths to tell,
 My soul detests him as the gates of hell.

Thou first be witness, hospitable Jove !
 And ev'ry god inspiring social love !
 And witness ev'ry household pow'r that waits
 Guard of these fires, and angel of these gates !
 Ere the next moon increase, or this decay,
 His ancient realms Ulysses shall survey,

In blood and dust each proud oppressor mourn?
And the lost glories of his house return.

Nor shall that meed be thine, nor ever more
Shall lov'd Ulysses hail this happy shore,
(Reply'd Eumæus :) To the present hour
Now turn thy thought, and joys within our pow'r.
From sad reflection let my soul repose;
The name of him awakes a thousand woes.
But guard him, gods ! and to these arms restore !
Not his true comfort can desire him more ;
Not old Laertes, broken with despair ;
Not young Telemachus, his blooming heir.
Alas, Telemachus ! my sorrows flow
Afresh for thee, my second cause of woe !
Like some fair plant set by a heav'nly hand,
He grew, he flourish'd, and he blest the land ;
In all the youth his father's image shin'd,
Bright in his person, brighter in his mind.
What man or god deceiv'd his better sense,
Far on the swelling seas to wander hence ?
To distant Pylos, hapless ! is he gone,
To seek his father's fate, and find his own !
For traitors wait his way, with dire design
To end at once the great Arcean line.
But let us leave him to their wills above ;
The fates of men are in the hand of Jove.
And now, my venerable guest ! declare
Your name, your parents, and your native air :
Sincere from whence begun your course relate,
And to what ship I owe the friendly freight ?

Thus he : And thus (with prompt invention bold)
The cautious chief his ready story told.

On dark reserve what better can prevail,
 Or from the fluent tongue produce the tale,
 Than when two friends, alone, in peaceful place
 Confer, and wines and cates the table grace;
 But most the kind inviter's cheerful face?
 Thus might we sit, with social goblets crown'd,
 Till the whole circle of the year goes round;
 Not the whole circle of the year would close
 My long narration of a life of woes.
 But such was heav'n's high will! Know then, I came
 From sacred Crete, and from a fire of fame:
 Castor Hylacides (that name he bore)
 Belov'd and honour'd in his native shore;
 Bless'd in his riches, in his children more.
 Sprung of a handmaid, from a bought embrace,
 I shar'd his kindness with his lawful race:
 But when that fate which all must undergo,
 From earth remov'd him to the shades below,
 The large domain his greedy sons divide,
 And each was portion'd as the lots decide.
 Little, alas! was left my wretched share,
 Except a house, a covert from the air.
 But what by niggard fortune was deny'd,
 A willing widow's copious wealth supply'd.
 My valour was my plea, a gallant mind,
 That, true to honour, never lagg'd behind,
 (The sex is ever to a soldier kind).
 Now wasting years my former strength confound,
 And added woes have bow'd me to the ground;
 Yet by the stubble you may guess the grain,
 And mark the ruins of no vulgar man.

Me Pallas gave to lead the martial storm,
 And the fair ranks of battle to deform;
 Me Mars inspir'd to turn the foe to flight,
 And tempt the secret ambush of the night.
 Let ghastly death in all his forms appear,
 I saw him not; it was not mine to fear.
 Before the rest I rais'd my ready steel;
 The first I met, he yielded, or he fell.
 But works of peace my soul disdain'd to bear,
 The rural labour, or domestic care.
 To raise the mast, the missile dart to wing,
 And send swift arrows from the bounding string,
 Were arts the gods made grateful to my mind;
 Those gods, who turn (to various ends design'd)
 The various thoughts and talents of mankind. }
 Before the Grecians touch'd the Trojan plain,
 Nine times commander or by land or main,
 In foreign fields I spread my glory far,
 Great in the praise, rich in the spoils of war:
 Thence charg'd with riches, as increas'd in fame,
 To Crete return'd, an honourable name.
 But when great Jove that direful war decreed,
 Which rous'd all Greece, and made the mighty bleed;
 Our states myself and Idomen employ
 To lead their fleets, and carry death to Troy.
 Nine years we warr'd, the tenth saw Ilion fall;
 Homeward we sail'd, but heav'n dispers'd us all.
 One only month my wife enjoy'd my stay;
 So will'd the god who gives and takes away.
 Nine ships I mann'd, equipp'd with ready stores,
 Intent to voyage to th' Egyptian shores;

In feast and sacrifice my chosen train
 Six days consum'd; the seventh we plough'd the main.
 Crete's ample fields diminish to our eye;
 Before the Boreal blasts the vessels fly;
 Safe through the level seas we sweep our way;
 The steerman governs, and the ships obey.
 The fifth fair morn we stem th' Egyptian tide,
 And tilting o'er the bay the vessels ride;
 To anchor there my fellows I command,
 And spies commission to explore the land.
 But sway'd by lust of gain, and headlong will,
 The coasts they ravage, and the natives kill.
 The spreading clamour to their city flies,
 And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise.
 The redd'ning dawn reveals the circling fields
 Horrid with bristly spears, and glancing shields.
 Jove thunder'd on their side. Our guilty head
 We turn'd to flight; the gath'ring vengeance spread
 On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lie dead.
 I then explor'd my thought, what course to prove;
 (And sure the thought was dictated by Jove;
 Oh had he left me to that happier doom,
 And sav'd a life of miseries to come!)
 The radiant helmet from my brows unlac'd,
 And low on earth my shield and javelin cast,
 I meet the monarch with a suppliant's face,
 Approach his chariot, and his knees embrace.
 He heard, he sav'd, he plac'd me at his side;
 My state he pity'd, and my tears he dry'd,
 Restrain'd the rage the vengeful foe exprest,
 And turn'd the deadly weapons from my breast.

Pious ! to guard the hospitable rite,
And fearing Jove, whom mercy's works delight.

In Egypt thus with peace and plenty blest,
I liv'd (and happy still had liv'd) a guest.
On sev'n bright years successive blessings wait;
The next chang'd all the colour of my fate.
A false Phoenician, of insidious mind,
Vers'd in vile arts, and foe to human kind,
With semblance fair invites me to his home;
I seiz'd the proffer (ever fond to roam) :
Domestic in his faithless roof I staid,
Till the swift sun his annual circle made.
To Lybia then he meditates the way,
With guileful art a stranger to betray,
And fell to bondage in a foreign land.
Much doubting, yet compell'd, I quit the strand.
Through the mid seas the nimble pinnace sails,
Aloof from Crete, before the northern gales :
But when remote her chalky cliffs we lost,
And far from ken of any other coast,
When all was wild expanse of sea and air,
Then doom'd high Jove due vengeance to prepare.
He hung a night of horrors o'er their head,
The shaded ocean blacken'd as it spread ;
He lanc'd the fiery bolt ; from pole to pole
Broad burst the lightnings, deep the thunders roll ;
In giddy rounds the whirling ship is tost,
And all in clouds of smoth'ring sulphur lost.
As from a hanging rock's tremendous height,
The sable crows with intercepted flight
Drop endlong ; fear'd, and black with sulph'rous hue :
So from the deck are hurl'd the ghastly crew.

Such end the wicked found ! But Jove's intent
 Was yet to save th' oppress'd and innocent.
 Plac'd on the mast (the last recourse of life),
 With winds and waves I held unequal strife ;
 For nine long days the billows tilting o'er,
 The tenth soft wafts me to Thesprotia's shore.
 The monarch's son a shipwreck'd wretch reliev'd,
 The fire with hospitable rites receiv'd,
 And in his palace like a brother plac'd,
 With gifts of price and gorgeous garments grac'd.
 While here I sojourn'd, oft I heard the fame
 How late Ulysses to the country came ;
 How lov'd, how honour'd in this court he staid,
 And here his whole collected treasure laid :
 I saw myself the vast unnumber'd store
 Of steel elab'rate, and refulgent ore,
 And brass high heap'd, amidst the regal dome ;
 Immense supplies for ages yet to come !
 Meantime he voyag'd to explore the will
 Of Jove on high Dodona's holy hill,
 What means might best his safe return avail,
 To come in pomp, or bear a secret sail ?
 Full oft has Phidon, whilst he pour'd the wine,
 Attesting solemn all the pow'rs divine,
 That soon Ulysses would return, declar'd,
 The sailors waiting, and the ships prepar'd.
 But first the king dismiss'd me from his shores,
 For fair Dulichium crown'd with fruitful stores ;
 To good Acastus' friendly care consign'd :
 But other counsels pleas'd the sailors mind :
 New frauds were plotted by the faithless train,
 And misery demands me once again.

Soon as remote from shore they plough the wave,
 With ready hands they rush to seize their slave;
 Then with these tatter'd rags they wrapt me round,
 (Stript of my own), and to the vessel bound.
 At eve, at Ithaca's delightful land
 The ship arriv'd: Forth issuing on the sand,
 They sought repast; while, to th' unhappy kind,
 The pitying gods themselves my chains unbind.
 Soft I descended, to the sea apply'd
 My naked breast, and shot along the tide.
 Soon past beyond their sight, I left the flood,
 And took the spreading shelter of the wood.
 Their prize escap'd the faithless pirates mourn'd;
 But deem'd inquiry vain, and to their ship return'd.
 Screen'd by protecting gods from hostile eyes,
 They led me to a good man and a wife;
 To live beneath thy hospitable care,
 And wait the woes heav'n dooms me yet to bear.

Unhappy guest! whose sorrows touch my mind!
 (Thus good Eumæus with a sigh rejoin'd);
 For real suff'rings since I grieve sincere,
 Check not with fallacies the springing tear;
 Nor turn the passion into groundless joy.
 For him, whom heav'n has destin'd to destroy.
 Oh! had he perish'd on some well-fought day,
 Or in his friends embraces dy'd away!
 That grateful Greece with streaming eyes might raise
 Historic marbles, to record his praise:
 His praise, eternal on the faithful stone,
 Had with transmissive honours grac'd his son.
 Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,
 Sunk is the hero, and his glory lost!

While pensive in this solitary den,
 Far from gay cities, and the ways of men,
 I linger life; nor to the court repair,
 But when the constant queen commands my care;
 Or when, to taste her hospitable board,
 Some guest arrives, with rumours of her lord:
 And these indulge their want, and those their wo,
 And here the tears, and there the goblets flow.
 By many such have I been warn'd; but chief
 By one Ætolian robb'd of all belief,
 Whose hap it was to this our roof to roam,
 For murder banish'd from his native home.
 He swore, Ulysses on the coast of Crete
 Staid but a season to refit his fleet;
 A few revolving months should waft him o'er,
 Fraught with bold warriors, and a boundless store.
 O thou! whom age has taught to understand,
 And heav'n has guided with a fav'ring hand!
 On God or mortal to obtrude a lie
 Forbear, and dread to flatter, as to die,
 Not for such ends my house and heart are free,
 But dear respect to Jove, and charity.

And why, oh swain of unbelieving mind!
 (Thus quick reply'd the wisest of mankind),
 Doubt you my oath? yet more my faith to try,
 A solemn compact let us ratify,
 And witness ev'ry pow'r that rules the sky!
 If here Ulysses from his labours rest,
 Be then my prize a tunic and a vest;
 And, where my hopes invite me, strait transport
 In safety to Dulichium's friendly court.

But if he greets not thy desiring eye,
Hurl me from yon dread precipice on high;
The due reward of fraud and perjury.

Doubtless, oh guest! great laud and praise were
mine,

(Reply'd the swain for spotless faith divine),
If, after social rites and gifts bestow'd,
I stain'd my hospitable hearth with blood.
How would the gods my righteous toils succeed,
And bless the hand that made a stranger bleed?
No more—th' approaching hours of silent night
First claim refection, then to rest invite;
Beneath our humble cottage let us haste,
And here, unenvy'd, rural dainties taste.

Thus commun'd these; while to their lowly dome
The full-fed swine return'd with ev'ning home;
Compell'd, reluctant, to their sev'ral sties,
With din obstrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.
Then to the slaves:—Now from the herd the best
Select, in honour of our foreign guest:
With him let us the genial banquet share,
For great and many are the griefs we bear;
While those who from our labours heap their board,
Blaspheme their feeder, and forget their lord.

Thus speaking, with dispatchful hand he took
A weighty axe, and cleft the solid oak;
This on the earth he pil'd; a boar full-fed
Of five years age, before the pile was led:
The swain, whom acts of piety delight,
Observant of the gods, begins the rite;

First shears the forehead of the bristly boar,
 And suppliant stands, invoking ev'ry pow'r
 To speed Ulysses to his native shore.
 A knotty stake then aiming at his head,
 Down dropp'd he groaning, and the spirit fled.
 The scorching flames climb round on ev'ry side :
 Then the sing'd members they with skill divide ;
 On these, in rolls of fat, involv'd with art,
 The choicest morsels lay from ev'ry part.
 Some in the flames, bestrow'd with flour, they threw :
 Some cut in fragments, from the forks they drew :
 These while on sev'ral tables they dispose,
 As priest himself the blameless rustic rose ;
 Expert the destin'd victim to dispart,
 In seven just portions, pure of hand and heart.
 One sacred to the Nymphs apart they lay,
 Another to the winged son of May :
 The rural tribe in common share the rest,
 The king the chine, the honour of the feast,
 Who sat delighted at his servant's board ;
 The faithful servant joy'd his unknown lord.
 Oh be thou dear (Ulysses cry'd) to Jove,
 As well thou claim'st a grateful stranger's love !
 Be then thy thanks, (the bounteous swain reply'd),
 Enjoyment of the good the gods provide.
 From God's own hand descend our joys and woes ;
 These he decrees, and he but suffers those.
 All pow'r is his, and whatsoe'er he wills,
 The will itself, omnipotent, fulfills.
 This said, the first-fruits to the gods he gave ;
 Then pour'd of offer'd wine the sable wave :

In great Ulysses' hand he plac'd the bowl;
 He sat, and sweet refection cheer'd his soul.
 The bread from canisters Mefaulius gave,
 (Eumaeus' proper treasure bought this slave,
 And led from Taphos, to attend his board,
 A servant added to his absent lord).
 His task it was the wheaten loaves to lay,
 And from the banquet take the bowls away.
 And now the rage of hunger was repress'd,
 And each betakes him to his couch to rest.

Now came the night, and darkness cover'd o'er
 The face of things; the winds began to roar;
 The driving storm the wat'ry west-wind pours,
 And Jove descends in deluges of show'rs.
 Studious of rest and warmth, Ulysses lies,
 Foreseeing from the first the storm would rise;
 In mere necessity of coat and cloak,
 With artful preface to his host he spoke.

Hear me, my friends! who this good banquet grace;
 'Tis sweet to play the fool in time and place;
 And wine can of their wits the wise beguile,
 Make the sage frolic, and the serious smile,
 The grave in merry measures frisk about,
 And many a long-repent'd word bring out.
 Since to be talkative I now commence,
 Let wit cast off the sullen yoke of sense.
 Once I was strong, (would heav'n restore those days!)
 And with my betters claim'd a share of praise.
 Ulysses, Menelaus led forth a band,
 And join'd me with them, ('twas their own command);
 A deathful ambush for the foe to lay,
 Beneath Troy walls by night we took our way:

There, clad in arms, along the marshes spread,
 We made the osier-fringed bank our bed.
 Full soon th' inclemency of heav'n I feel ;
 Nor had these shoulders cov'ring, but of steel.
 Sharp blew the north ; snow whit'ning all the fields
 Froze with the blast, and gath'ring glaz'd our shields.
 There all but I, well fenc'd with cloak and vest,
 Lay cover'd by their ample shields at rest.
 Fool that I was ! I left behind my own ;
 The skill of weather and of winds unknown,
 And trusted to my coat and shield alone !
 When now was wasted more than half the night,
 And the stars faded at approaching light ;
 Sudden I jogg'd Ulysses, who was laid
 Fast by my side, and, shiv'ring, thus I said.

Here longer in this field I cannot lie,
 The winter pinches, and with cold I die ;
 And die asham'd, (oh wisest of mankind !)
 The only fool who left his cloak behind.

He thought, and answer'd : Hardly waking yet,
 Sprung in his mind the momentary wit ;
 (That wit, which or in council or in fight,
 Still met th' emergence, and determin'd right),
 Hush thee, he cry'd, (soft whisp'ring in my ear),
 Speak not a word, lest any Greek should hear—
 And then (supporting on his arm his head)
 Hear me, companions ! (thus aloud he said) ;
 Methinks too distant from the fleet we lie :
 Ev'n now a vision stood before my eye,
 And sure the warning vision was from high :
 Let from among us some swift courier rise,
 Haste to the gen'ral, and demand supplies.

Up started Thoas strait, Andraemon's son:
 Nimble he rose, and cast his garment down;
 Instant the racer vanish'd off the ground;
 That instant in his cloak I wrapp'd me round:
 And safe I slept, till brightly-dawning shone
 The morn, conspicuous on her golden throne.

Oh were my strength as then, as then my age!
 Some friend would fence me from the winter's rage.
 Yet tatter'd as I look, I challeng'd then
 The honours and the offices of men;
 Some master, or some servant would allow
 A cloak and vest—but I am nothing now!

Well hast thou spoke, (rejoin'd th' attentive swain),
 Thy lips let fall no idle word or vain!
 Nor garment shalt thou want, nor aught beside,
 Meet for the wand'ring suppliant to provide.
 But in the morning take thy cloaths again,
 For here one vest suffices ev'ry swain;
 No change of garments to our hinds is known:
 But when return'd, the good Ulysses' son
 With better hand shall grace with fit attires
 His guest, and send thee where thy soul desires.

The honest herdsman rose, as this he said,
 And drew before the hearth the stranger's bed:
 The fleecy spoils of sheep, a goat's rough hide
 He spreads; and adds a mantle thick and wide;
 With store to heap above him, and below,
 And guard each quarter as the tempests blow.
 There lay the king, and all the rest supine;
 All but the careful master of the swine:
 Forth hasted he to tend his bristly care,
 Well arm'd, and fenc'd against nocturnal air;

His weighty faulchion o'er his shoulder ty'd;
 His shaggy cloak a mountain-goat supply'd;
 With his broad spear, the dread of dogs and men,
 He seeks his lodging in the rocky den.
 There to the tusk herd he bends his way,
 Where screen'd from Boreas high o'erarch'd they lay.

T H E

N O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K XV.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The Return of Telemachus.

T H E goddess Minerva commands Telemachus in a vision to return to Ithaca. Pisistratus and he take leave of Menelaus, and arrive at Pylos, where they part; and Telemachus sets sail, after having received on board Theoclymenus the soothsayer. The scene then changes to the cottage of Eumaeus, who entertains Ulysses with a recital of his adventures. In the meantime Telemachus arrives on the coast, and, sending the vessel to the town, proceeds by himself to the lodge of Eumaeus.

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B O O K XV.

NOW had Minerva reach'd those ample plains,
 Fam'd for the dance, where Menelaus reigns;
 Anxious she flies to great Ulysses' heir,
 His instant voyage challeng'd all her care.
 Beneath the royal portico display'd,
 With Nestor's son, Telemachus was laid:
 In sleep profound the son of Nestor lies;
 Not thine, Ulysses! Care unseal'd his eyes:
 Restless he griev'd, with various fears oppress'd,
 And all thy fortunes roll'd within his breast.
 When, O Telemachus! (the goddess said),
 Too long in vain, too widely hast thou stray'd,
 Thus leaving careless thy paternal right
 The robbers prize, the prey to lawless might,
 On fond pursuits neglectful while you roam,
 Ev'n now the hand of rapine sacks the dome.
 Hence to Atrides, and his leave implore
 To launch thy vessel for thy natal shore:
 Fly, whilst thy mother virtuous yet withstands
 Her kindred's wishes, and her sire's commands;
 Through both Eurymachus pursues the dame,
 And with the noblest gifts asserts his claim.
 Hence, therefore, while thy stores thy own remain;
 Thou know'st the practice of their female train,
 Lost in the children of the present spouse,
 They slight the pledges of their former vows:
 Their love is always with the lover past;
 Still the succeeding flame expels the last.

Let o'er thy house some chosen maid preside,
 Till heav'n decrees to bless thee in a bride.
 But now thy more attentive ears incline,
 Observe the warnings of a pow'r divine :
 For thee their snares the suitor-lords shall lay
 In Samo's sands, or straits of Ithaca ;
 To seize thy life shall lurk the murd'rous band,
 Ere yet thy footsteps press thy native land.
 No—sooner far their riot and their lust
 All-cov'ring earth shall bury deep in dust !
 Then distant from the scatter'd islands steer,
 Nor let the night retard thy full career :
 Thy heav'nly guardian shall instruct the gales
 To smoothe thy passage, and supply thy sails :
 And when at Ithaca thy labour ends,
 Send to the town thy vessel with thy friends,
 But seek thou first the master of the swine,
 (For still to thee his loyal thoughts incline) ;
 There pass the night : While he his course pursues
 To bring Penelope the wish'd-for news,
 That thou, safe sailing from the Pylian strand,
 Art come to bless her in thy native land.

Thus spoke the goddess, and resum'd her flight
 To the pure regions of eternal light.
 Meanwhile Pisistratus he gently shakes,
 And with these words the slumb'ring youth awakes :

Rise, son of Nestor ! for the road prepare,
 And join the harness'd couriers to the car.

What cause, he cry'd, can justify our flight,
 To tempt the dangers of forbidding night ?
 Here wait we rather, till approaching day
 Shall prompt our speed, and point the ready way.

Nor think of flight, before the Spartan king
 Shall bid farewell, and bounteous presents bring;
 Gifts, which to distant ages safely stor'd,
 The sacred act of friendship shall record.

Thus he. But, when the dawn bestreak'd the east,
 The king from Helen rose, and sought his guest.
 As soon as his approach the hero knew
 The splendid mantle round him first he threw,
 Then o'er his ample shoulders whirl'd the cloak,
 Respectful met the monarch, and bespoke.

Hail, great Atrides! favour'd of high Jove!
 Let not thy friends in vain for licence move.
 Swift let us measure back the wat'ry way,
 Nor check our speed, impatient of delay.

If with desire so strong thy bosom glows,
 Ill, said the king, should I thy wish oppose;
 For oft in others freely I reprove
 The ill-tim'd efforts of officious love;
 Who love too much, hate in the like extreme,
 And both the golden mean alike condemn.
 Alike he thwarts the hospitable end,
 Who drives the free, or stays the hasty friend;
 True friendship's laws are by this rule express'd,
 Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.
 Yet stay, my friends! and in your chariot take
 The noblest presents that our love can make:
 Meantime commit we to our womens care
 Some choice domestic viands to prepare;
 The trav'ler rising from the banquet gay,
 Eludes the labours of the tedious way.
 Then if a wider course shall rather please,
 Through spacious Argos and the realms of Greece,

Atrides in his chariot shall attend,
 Himself thy convoy to each royal friend.
 No prince will let Ulysses' heir remove
 Without some pledge, some monument of love :
 These will the chaldron, these the tripod giye,
 From those the well-pair'd mules we shall receive,
 Or bowl emboss'd, whose golden figures live.

To whom the youth, for prudence fam'd, reply'd :
 O monarch, care of heav'n ! thy people's pride !
 No friend in Ithaca my place supplies,
 No pow'rful hands are there, no watchful eyes :
 My stores expos'd, and fenceless house demand
 The speediest succour from my guardian hand ;
 Lest, in a search too anxious and too vain
 Of one joy lost, I lose what yet remain.

His purpose when the gen'rous warrior heard,
 He charg'd the household cates to be prepar'd.
 Now with the dawn, from his adjoining home,
 Was Boethoedes Eteoneus come ;
 Swift as the word he forms the rising blaze,
 And o'er the coals the smoaking fragments lays.
 Meantime the king, his son, and Helen went
 Where the rich wardrobe breath'd a costly scent.
 The king selected from the glitt'ring rows
 A bowl ; the prince a silver beaker chose.
 The beauteous queen revolv'd with careful eyes
 Her various textures of unnumber'd dyes,
 And chose the largest ; with no vulgar art
 Her own fair hands embroider'd ev'ry part :
 Beneath the rest it lay divinely bright,
 Like radiant Hesper o'er the gems of night.

Then with each gift they hasten'd to their guest;
And thus the king Ulysses' heir addrest.

Since fix'd are thy resolves, may thund'ring Jove
With happiest omens thy desires approve!
This silver bowl, whose costly margins shine
Enchas'd with gold, this valu'd gift be thine;
To me this present, of Vulcanian frame,
From Sidon's hospitable monarch came;
To thee we now consign the precious load,
The pride of kings, and labour of a god.

Then gave the cup; while Megapenthe brought
The silver vase, with living sculpture wrought.
The beauteous queen, advancing next, display'd
The shining veil, and thus endearing said.

Accept, dear youth, this monument of love,
Long since, in better days, by Helen wove:
Safe in thy mother's care the vesture lay,
To deck thy bride, and grace thy nuptial day.
Meantime, mayst thou with happiest speed regain
Thy stately palace, and thy wide domain.

She said, and gave the veil: With grateful look
The prince the variegated present took.
And now, when through the royal dome they pass'd,
High on a throne the king each stranger plac'd.
A golden ewer th' attendant damsel brings,
Replete with water from the crystal springs;
With copious streams the shining vase supplies
A silver laver of capacious size.
They wash. The tables in fair order spread,
The glitt'ring canisters are crown'd with bread;
Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
Of choicest sort and flavour; rich repast.

Whilst Eteoneus portions out the shares,
 Atrides' son the purple draught prepares.
 And now (each fated with the genial feast,
 And the short rage of thirst and hunger ceast)
 Ulysses' son, with his illustrious friend,
 The horses join, the polish'd car ascend.
 Along the court the fiery steeds rebound,
 And the wide portal echoes to the found.
 The king precedes: A bowl with fragrant wine
 (Libation destin'd to the pow'rs divine)
 His right hand held: Before the steeds he stands,
 Then, mix'd with pray'rs, he utters these commands.

Farewell and prosper, youths! Let Nestor know
 What grateful thoughts still in this bosom glow,
 For all the proofs of his paternal care,
 Through the long dangers of the ten years war.
 Ah! doubt not our report (the prince rejoin'd)
 Of all the virtues of thy gen'rous mind.
 And oh! return'd might we Ulysses meet!
 To him thy presents shew, thy words repeat:
 How will each speech his grateful wonder raise?
 How will each gift indulge us in thy praise?

Scarce ended thus the prince, when on the right
 Advanc'd the bird of Jove, auspicious sight!
 A milk-white fowl his clinching talents bore,
 With care domestic pamper'd at the floor.
 Peasants in vain with threat'ning cries pursue;
 In solemn speed the bird majestic flew
 Full dexter to the car: The prosp'rous sight
 Fill'd ev'ry breast with wonder and delight.

But Nestor's son the cheerful silence broke,
 And in these words the Spartan chief bespoke.

Say if to us the gods these omens send,
Or fates peculiar to thyself portend?

Whilst yet the monarch paus'd, with doubts oppress'd,
The beauteous queen reliev'd his lab'ring breast.

Hear me, she cry'd, to whom the gods have giv'n
To read this sign and mystic sense of heav'n,
As thus the plummy sov'reign of the air
Left on the mountain's brow his callow care;
And wander'd through the wide aetherial way
To pour his wrath on yon luxurious prey;
So shall thy godlike father, tofs'd in vain
Through all the dangers of the boundless main,
Arrive, (or is perchance already come),
From slaughter'd gluttons to release the dome.

Oh! if this promis'd bless by thund'ring Jove
(The prince reply'd) stands fix'd in fate above;
To thee, as to some god, I'll temples raise,
And crown thy altars with the costly blaze.

He said; and bending o'er his chariot, flung
Athwart the fiery steeds the smarting thong:
The bounding shafts upon the harness play,
Till night descending intercepts the way,
To Diocles, at Pherae they repair,
Whose boasted sire was sacred Alpheus' heir;
With him all night the youthful strangers staid,
Nor found the hospitable rites unpaid.
But soon as morning from her orient bed
Had ting'd the mountains with her earliest red,
They join'd the steeds, and on the chariot sprung;
The brazen portals in their passage rung.

To Pylos soon they came; when thus begun
To Nestor's heir Ulysses' godlike son:

Let not Pisistratus in vain be prest,
 Nor unconsenting hear his friend's request;
 His friend by long hereditary claim,
 In toils his equal, and in years the same.
 No farther from our vessel, I implore,
 The courfers drive; but lash them to the shore.
 Too long thy father would his friend detain;
 I dread his profer'd kindness, urg'd in vain.

The hero paus'd, and ponder'd this request,
 While love and duty warr'd within his breast:
 At length resolv'd, he turn'd his ready hand,
 And lash'd his panting courfers to the strand.
 There, while within the poop with care he stor'd
 The regal presents of the Spartan lord;
 With speed begone, (said he), call ev'ry mate,
 Ere yet to Nestor I the tale relate:
 'Tis true, the fervour of his gen'rous heart
 Brooks no repulse, nor couldst thou soon depart:
 Himself will seek thee hear, nor wilt thou find,
 In words alone, the Pylian monarch kind.
 But when arriv'd he thy return shall know,
 How will his breast with honest fury glow?
 This said, the sounding strokes his horses fire,
 And soon he reach'd the palace of his sire.

Now, (cry'd Telemachus), with speedy care
 Hoise ev'ry sail, and ev'ry oar prepare.
 Swift as the word his willing mates obey,
 And seize their seats, impatient for the sea.

Meantime the Prince with sacrifice adores
 Minerva, and her guardian aid implores;
 When lo! a wretch ran breathless to the shore,
 New from his crime, and reeking yet with gore.

A seer he was, from great Melampus sprung,
 Melampus, who in Pylos flourish'd long,
 Till, urg'd by wrongs, a foreign realm he chose,
 Far from the hateful cause of all his woes.
 Neleus his treasures one long year detains;
 As long he groan'd in Phylacus his chains:
 Meantime, what anguish and what rage combin'd,
 For lovely Pero rack'd his lab'ring mind!
 Yet 'scap'd he death; and vengeful of his wrong,
 To Pylos drove the lowing herds along:
 Then (Neleus vanquish'd, and consign'd the fair
 To Bias' arms) he sought a foreign air:
 Argos the rich for his retreat he chose,
 There form'd his empire, there his palace rose.
 From him Antiphates and Mantius came:
 The first begot Oicleus great in fame,
 And he Amphiaraus, immortal name!
 The people's saviour, and divinely wise,
 Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the skies,
 Yet short his date of life! by female pride he dies.
 From Mantius Clitus, whom Aurora's love
 Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above;
 And Polyphides, on whom P'heebus shone
 With fullest rays, Amphiaraus now gone;
 In Hyperesia's groves he made abode,
 And taught mankind the counsels of the god.
 From him sprung Theoclymenus, who found
 (The sacred wine yet foaming on the ground)
 Telemachus: Whom, as to heav'n he press'd
 His ardent vows, the stranger thus address'd.

O thou that dost thy happy course prepare
 With pure libations, and with solemn pray'r!

By that dread pow'r to whom thy vows are paid,
 By all the lives of these, thy own dear head,
 Declare sincerely to no foe's demand
 Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land.

Prepare then, said Telemachus, to know
 A tale from falsehood free, not free from woe.
 From Ithaca, of royal birth, I came,
 And great Ulysses (ever honour'd name!)
 Was once my sire: Though now for ever lost
 In Stygian gloom he glides a pensive ghost!
 Whose fate inquiring, through the world we rove;
 The last, the wretched proof of filial love.

The stranger then: Nor shall I aught conceal,
 But the dire secret of my fate reveal.
 Of my own tribe an Argive wretch I flew;
 Whose pow'rful friends the luckless deed pursue
 With unrelenting rage, and force from home
 The blood-stain'd exile, ever doom'd to roam.
 But bear, Oh bear me o'er yon azure flood;
 Receive the suppliant! spare my destin'd blood!

Stranger, (reply'd the prince), securely rest
 Affianc'd in our faith; henceforth our guest.
 Thus affable, Ulysses' godlike heir
 Takes from the stranger's hand the glitt'ring spear:
 He climbs the ship, ascends the stern with haste,
 And by his side the guest accepted plac'd.
 The chief his orders gives: Th' obedient band
 With due observance wait the chief's command:
 With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind
 The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind.
 Minerva calls; the ready gales obey
 With rapid speed to whirl them o'er the sea.

Crunus they pass'd, next Chalcis roll'd away,
 When thick'ning darkness clos'd the doubtful day :
 The silver Phaea's glitt'ring rills they lost,
 And skimm'd along by Elis' sacred coast.
 Then cautious through the rocky reaches wind,
 And turning sudden, shun the death design'd.

Meantime the king, Eumacus, and the rest,
 Sat in the cottage, at their rural feast :
 The banquet pass'd, and satiate ev'ry man,
 To try his host Ulysses thus began.

Yet one night more, my friends, indulge your guest ;
 The last I purpose in your walls to rest :
 To-morrow for myself I must provide,
 And only ask your counsel, and a guide :
 Patient to roam the street, by hunger led,
 And bless the friendly hand that gives me bread.
 There in Ulysses' roof I may relate
 Ulysses' wand'rings to his royal mate ;
 Or mingling with the suitors haughty train,
 Not undeserving, some support obtain.
 Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,
 Patron of industry and manual arts :
 Few can with me in dext'rous works contend,
 The pyre to build, the stubborn oak to rend ;
 To turn the tasteful viand o'er the flame ;
 Or foam the goblet with a purple stream.
 Such are the tasks of men of mean estate,
 Whom fortune dooms to serve the rich and great.

Alas ! (Eumacus with a sigh rejoin'd),
 How sprung a thought so monstrous in thy mind ?
 If on that godless race thou wouldst attend,
 Fate owes thee sure a miserable end !

Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky,
 And pull descending vengeance from on high,
 Not such, my friend, the servants of their feast :
 A blooming train in rich embroid'ry drest,
 With earth's whole tribute the bright table bends,
 And smiling round celestial youth attends.
 Stay then : No eye askance beholds thee here ;
 Sweet is thy converse to each social ear ;
 Well pleas'd, and pleasing, in our cottage rest,
 Till good Telemachus accepts his guest
 With genial gifts, and change of fair attires,
 And safe conveys thee where thy soul desires.

To him the man of woes : O gracious Jove !
 Reward this stranger's hospitable love,
 Who knows the son of sorrow to relieve,
 Cheers the sad heart, nor lets affliction grieve.
 Of all the ills unhappy mortals know,
 A life of wand'rings is the greatest wo :
 On all their weary ways wait care and pain,
 And pine and penury, a meagre train.
 To such a man since harbour you afford,
 Relate the farther fortunes of your lord ;
 What cares his mother's tender breast engage,
 And sire, forsaken on the verge of age ;
 Beneath the sun prolong they yet their breath,
 Or range the house of darkness and of death ?

To whom the swain : Attend what you inquire.
 Laertes lives, the miserable sire,
 Lives, but implores of ev'ry pow'r to lay
 The burden down, and wishes for the day.
 Torn from his offspring in the eve of life,
 Torn from th' embraces of his tender wife,

Sole, and all comfortless, he wastes away
 Old age, untimely posting ere his day.
 She too, sad mother! for Ulysses lost,
 Pin'd out her bloom, and vanish'd to a ghost.
 (So dire a fate, ye righteous gods! avert,
 From ev'ry friendly, ev'ry feeling heart!)
 While yet she was, tho' clouded o'er with grief,
 Her pleasing converse minister'd relief:
 With Ctimene, her youngest daughter, bred,
 One roof contain'd us, and one table fed.
 But when the softly stealing pace of time
 Crept on from childhood into youthful prime,
 To Samo's isle she sent the wedded fair;
 Me to the fields, to tend the rural care:
 Array'd in garments her own hands had wove,
 Nor less the darling object of her love.
 Her hapless death my brighter days o'ercast,
 Yet providence deserts me not at last;
 My present labours food and drink procure,
 And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.
 Small is the comfort from the queen to hear
 Unwelcome news, or vex the royal ear;
 Blank and discountenanc'd the servants stand,
 Nor dare to question where the proud command:
 No profit springs beneath usurping pow'rs;
 Want feeds not there, where luxury devours,
 Nor harbours charity where riot reigns:
 Proud are the lords, and wretched are the swains,
 The suff'ring chief at this began to melt;
 And, oh Eumaeus! thou (he cries) hast felt
 The spite of fortune too! her cruel hand
 Snatch'd thee an infant from thy native land!

Snatch'd from thy parents arms, thy parents eyes,
 To early wants ! a man of miseries !
 Thy whole sad story, from its first, declare :
 Sunk the fair city by the rage of war,
 Where once thy parents dwelt ? or did they keep,
 In humbler life, the lowing herds and sheep ?
 So left perhaps to tend the fleecy train,
 Rude pirates seiz'd, and shipp'd thee o'er the main ?
 Doom'd a fair prize to grace some prince's board,
 The worthy purchase of a foreign lord.

If then my fortunes can delight my friend,
 A story fruitful of events, attend :
 Another's sorrow may thy ear enjoy,
 And wine the lengthen'd intervals employ.
 Long nights the now declining year bestows ;
 A part we consecrate to soft repose,
 A part in pleasing talk we entertain ;
 For too much rest itself becomes a pain.
 Let those whom sleep invites, the call obey,
 Their cares resuming with the dawning day :
 Here let us feast, and to the feast be join'd
 Discourse, the sweeter banquet of the mind ;
 Review the series of our lives, and taste
 The melancholy joy of evils past :
 For he who much has suffer'd, much will know ;
 And pleas'd remembrance builds delight on wo.

Above Ortygia lies an isle of fame,
 Far hence remote, and Syria is the name ;
 (There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace
 The sun's diurnal, and his annual race) ;
 Not large, but fruitful ; stor'd with grafs to keep
 The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep ;

Her sloping hills the mantling vines adorn,
 And her rich valleys wave with golden corn.
 No want, no famine the glad natives know,
 Nor sink by sickness to the shades below;
 But when a length of years unnerves the strong,
 Apollo comes, and Cynthia comes along.
 They bend the silver bow with tender skill,
 And void of pain, the silent arrows kill.
 Two equal tribes this fertile land divide,
 Where two fair cities rise with equal pride.
 But both in constant peace one prince obey,
 And Ctesius there, my father, holds the sway,
 Freight'd, it seems, with toys of ev'ry sort
 A ship of Sidon anchor'd in our port;
 What time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,
 Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.
 This nymph, where anchor'd the Phoenician train,
 To wash her robes descending to the main,
 A smooth-tongu'd sailor won her to his mind;
 (For love deceives the best of woman-kind).
 A sudden trust from sudden liking grew;
 She told her name, her race, and all she knew.
 I too (she cry'd) from glorious Sidon came,
 My father Arybas, of wealthy fame;
 But snatch'd by pirates from my native place,
 The Taphians fold me to this man's embrace.

Haste then (the false-designing youth reply'd),
 Haste to thy country; love shall be thy guide:
 Haste to thy father's house, thy father's breast,
 For still he lives, and lives with riches blest.

“ Swear first (she cry’d), ye sailors ! to restore
 “ A wretch in safety to her native shore.”

Swift as she ask’d, the ready sailors swore.

She then proceeds : Now let our compact made

Be nor by signal nor by word betray’d,

Nor near me any of your crew descry’d

By road frequented, or by fountain-side.

Be silence still our guard. The monarch’s spies

(For watchful age is ready to surmise)

Are still at hand ; and this, reveal’d, must be

Death to yourselves, eternal chains to me.

Your vessel loaded, and your traffic past,

Dispatch a wary messenger with haste :

Then gold and costly treasures will I bring,

And more, the infant offspring of the king.

Him, child-like wand’ring forth, I’ll lead away,

(A noble prize!) and to your ship convey.

Thus spoke the dame, and homeward took the road.

A year they traffic, and their vessel load.

Their stores complete, and ready now to weigh,

A spy was sent their summons to convey :

An artist to my father’s palace came,

With gold and amber chains, elab’rate frame :

Each female eye the glitt’ring links employ,

They turn, review, and cheapen ev’ry toy.

He took th’ occasion as they stood intent,

Gave her the sign, and to his vessel went.

She straight pursu’d, and seiz’d my willing arm ;

I follow’d smiling, innocent of harm.

Three golden goblets in the porch she found,

(The guests not enter’d, but the table crown’d) ;

Hid in her fraudulent bosom, these she bore.
 Now set the sun, and darken'd all the shore.
 Arriving then, where tilting on the tides
 Prepar'd to launch the freighted vessel rides;
 Aboard they heave us, mount their decks, and sweep
 With level oar along the glassy deep.
 Six calmy days and six smooth nights we sail,
 And constant Jove supply'd the gentle gale.
 The sev'nth, the fraudulent wretch, (no cause descry'd),
 Touch'd by Diana's vengeful arrow, dy'd.
 Down dropt the caitiff corse, a worthless load,
 Down to the deep; there roll'd, the future food
 Of fierce sea-wolves, and monsters of the flood.
 An helpless infant, I remain'd behind;
 Thence born to Ithaca by wave and wind;
 Sold to Laertes, by divine command,
 And now adopted to a foreign land.

To him the king: Reciting thus thy cares,
 My secret soul in all thy sorrows shares:
 But one choice blessing (such is Jove's high will)
 Has sweeten'd all thy bitter draught of ill:
 Torn from thy country to no hapless end,
 The gods have, in a master, giv'n a friend.
 Whatever frugal nature needs is thine,
 (For she needs little), daily bread and wine.
 While I, so many wand'rings past and woes,
 Live but on what thy poverty bestows.

So pass'd in pleasing dialogue away
 The night; then down to short repose they lay;
 Till radiant rose the messenger of day.
 While in the port of Ithaca, the band
 Of young Telemachus approach'd the land;

Their sails they loos'd, they lash'd the mast aside,
 And cast their anchors, and the cables ty'd :
 Then on the breezy shore descending, join
 In grateful banquet o'er the rosy wine.
 When thus the prince : Now each his course pursue ;
 I to the fields, and to the city you.
 Long absent hence, I dedicate this day
 My swains to visit, and the works survey.
 Expect me with the morn, to pay the skies
 Our debt of safe return, in feast and sacrifice.

Then Theoclymenus : But who shall lend,
 Meantime, protection to thy stranger-friend ?
 Strait to the queen and palace shall I fly,
 Or yet more distant, to some lord apply ?

The prince return'd : Renown'd in days of yore
 Has stood our father's hospitable door ;
 No other roof a stranger should receive,
 Nor other hands than ours the welcome give.
 But in my absence riot fills the place,
 Nor bears the modest queen a stranger's face,
 From noiseful revel far remote she flies,
 But rarely seen, or seen with weeping eyes.
 No——let Eurymachus receive my guest,
 Of nature courteous, and by far the best ;
 He wooes the queen with more respectful flame,
 And emulates her former husband's fame :
 With what success, 'tis Jove's alone to know,
 And the hop'd nuptials turn to joy or wo.

Thus speaking, on the right up-soar'd in air
 The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger ;
 His deathful pounces tore a trembling dove ;
 The clotted feathers, scatter'd from above,

Between the hero and the vessel pour
Thick plumage, mingled with a sanguine show'r.

Th' observing augur took the prince aside,
Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetic cry'd.
Yon bird that dexter cuts th' aerial road,
Rose ominous, nor flies without a god :
No race but thine shall Ithaca obey,
To thine, for ages, heav'n decrees the sway.
Succeed the omen, gods ! (the youth rejoin'd) ;
Soon shall my bounties speak a grateful mind,
And soon each envy'd happiness attend
The man, who calls Telemachus his friend.
Then to Peiræus—Thou whom time has prov'd
A faithful servant, by thy prince belov'd !
Till we returning shall our guest demand,
Accept this charge, with honour at our hand.

To this Peiræus : Joyful I obey,
Well pleas'd the hospitable rites to pay.
The presence of thy guest shall best reward
(If long thy stay) the absence of my lord.

With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,
Mount the tall bark, and launch into the sea.
All with obedient haste forsake the shores,
And plac'd in order, spread their equal oars.
Then from the deck the prince his sandals takes ;
Pois'd in his hand the pointed jav'lin shakes.
They part ; while less'ning from the hero's view,
Swift to the town the well-row'd galley flew :
The hero trod the margin of the main,
And reach'd the mansion of his faithful swain.

Between the hearth and the vessel pour
Thick phlegm, mingled with a sanguine show,
Th' observing eagle took the prince under
Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetic cry'd,
You find that doctor cuts th' aerial road,
Not ominous, nor flies without a god:
No race but those that Ithaca obey,
To mine, for ages, heavy a doctor the town
Succed the gods, great! (the youth rejoind)
Soon shall my denaries speak a grateful mind,
And soon each cov'd happiness attend
The man, who calls Telemachus his friend.
Then to Peleus—Thou whom time has prov'd
A faithful servant, by thy prince believ'd!
Till we returning call our guest demand,
Accept this charge, with honour in our hand.
To this Peleus: Joyful I obey,
Well pleas'd the hospitable thee to pay.
The presence of thy guest shall sell reward,
If long thy stay, the absence of my lord.
With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,
Along the tide bank, and launch into the sea.
All with obed'g haste forsake the shore,
And plac'd in order, spread their royal cover.
Then from the deck the prince his father takes;
Poke'd in his hand the pointed jav'lin takes
They part: while hel'ning from the hero's view
Swim to the town the well-tried pelley crew:
The hero had the margin of the town
And reach'd the mansion of his faithful friend.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Discovery of Ulysses to Telemachus.

TELEMACHUS arriving at the lodge of Eumaeus, sends him to carry Penelope the news of his return. Minerva appearing to Ulysses, commands him to discover himself to his son. The princes, who had lain in ambush to intercept Telemachus in his way, their project being defeated, return to Ithaca.

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B O O K XVI.

S O O N as the morning blush'd along the plains,
Ulysses, and the monarch of the swains,
Awake the sleeping fires, their meal prepare,
And forth to pasture send the bristly care.
The prince's near approach the dogs descry,
And, fawning round his feet, confess their joy.
Their gentle blandishment the king survey'd,
Heard his resounding step, and instant said.

Some well-known friend (Eumaeus) bends this way;
His steps I hear; the dogs familiar play.

While yet he spoke, the prince advancing drew
Nigh to the lodge, and now appear'd in view.
Transported from his seat Eumaeus sprung,
Dropp'd the full bowl, and round his bosom hung;
Kissing his cheek, his hand, while from his eye
The tears rain'd copious in a show'r of joy.
As some fond sire, who ten long winters grieves,
From foreign climes an only son receives,
(Child of his age), with strong paternal joy
Forward he springs, and clasps the fav'rite boy:
So round the youth his arms Eumaeus spread,
As if the grave had giv'n him from the dead.

And is it thou? my ever-dear delight!
O art thou come to bless my longing sight!
Never, I never hop'd to view this day,
When o'er the waves you plough'd the desp'rate way.
Enter, my child! beyond my hopes restor'd,
O give these eyes to feast upon their lord.

Enter, oh feldom seen ! for lawless pow'rs
Too much detains thee from these sylvan bow'rs.

The prince reply'd : Eumæus, I obey ;
To seek thee, friend, I hither took my way.
But say, if in the court the queen reside
Severely chaste, or if commenc'd a bride ?

Thus he : And thus the monarch of the swains ;
Severely chaste Penelope remains ;
But lost to ev'ry joy, she wastes the day
In tedious cares, and weeps the night away.

He ended, and (receiving as they pass
The jav'lin, pointed with a star of brass)
They reach'd the dome ; the dome with marble shin'd ;
His seat Ulysses to the prince resign'd.
Not so—(exclaims the prince with decent grace)
For me, this house shall find an humbler place :
T' usurp the honours due to silver hairs
And rev'rend strangers, modest youth forbears.
Instant the swain the spoils of beasts supplies,
And bids the rural throne with osiers rise.
There sat the prince : The feast Eumæus spread ;
And heap'd the shining canisters with bread.
Thick o'er the board the plenteous viands lay,
The frugal remnants of the former day.
Then in a bowl he tempers gen'rous wines,
Around whose verge a mimic ivy twines.
And, now the rage of thirst and hunger fled,
Thus young Ulysses to Eumæus said.

Whence, father, from what shore this stranger, say ?
What vessel bore him o'er the wat'ry way ?
To human step our land impervious lies,
And round the coast circumfluent oceans rise.

The swain returns : A tale of sorrows hear ;
 In spacious Crete he drew his natal air,
 Long doom'd to wander o'er the land and main,
 For heav'n has wove his thread of life with pain.
 Half-breathless, 'scaping to the land, he flew
 From Threspot mariners, a murd'rous crew.
 To thee, my son, the suppliant I resign ;
 I gave him my protection, grant him thine.

Hard task, he cries, thy virtue gives thy friend,
 Willing to aid, unable to defend.
 Can strangers safely in the court reside,
 'Midst the swell'd insolence of lust and pride ?
 Ev'n I unsafe : The queen in doubt to wed,
 Or pay due honours to the nuptial bed ?
 Perhaps she weds regardless of her fame,
 Deaf to the mighty Ulyssæan name.
 However, stranger ! from our grace receive
 Such honours as besit a prince to give ;
 Sandals, a sword, and robes, respect to prove,
 And safe to sail with ornaments of love.
 Till then, thy guest amid the rural train
 Far from the court, from danger far detain.
 'Tis mine with food the hungry to supply,
 And clothe the naked from th' inclement sky.
 Here dwell in safety from the suitors wrongs,
 And the rude insults of ungovern'd tongues.
 For, shouldst thou suffer, pow'rless to relieve,
 I must behold it, and can only grieve.
 The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,
 O'erpow'r'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.
 To whom, while anger in his bosom glows,
 With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.

Since audience mild is deign'd, permit my tongue
 At once to pity and resent thy wrong.
 My heart weeps blood, to see a soul so brave
 Live to base insolence of pow'r a slave.
 But tell me, dost thou, prince, dost thou behold
 And hear their midnight-revels uncontroll'd ?
 Say, do thy subjects in bold faction rise,
 Or priests in fabled oracles advise ?
 Or are thy brothers, who should aid thy pow'r,
 Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour ?
 O that I were from great Ulysses sprung,
 Or that these wither'd nerves like thine were strung ;
 Or, heav'ns ! might he return ! (and soon appear
 He shall, I trust ; a hero scorns despair) ;
 Might he return, I yield my life a prey
 To my worst foe, if that avenging day
 Be not their last : But, should I lose my life
 Oppress'd by numbers in the glorious strife,
 I chuse the nobler part, and yield my breath,
 Rather than bear dishonour, worse than death ;
 Than see the hand of violence invade
 The rev'rend stranger, and the spotless maid ;
 Than see the wealth of kings consum'd in waste,
 The drunkards revel, and the gluttons feast.

Thus he, with anger flashing from his eyes ;
 Sincere the youthful hero made reply.
 Nor leagu'd in factious arms my subjects rise,
 Nor priests in fabled oracles advise ;
 Nor are my brothers, who should aid my pow'r,
 Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour.
 Ah me ! I boast no brother ; heav'n's dread king
 Gives from our stock an only branch to spring :

Alone Laertes reign'd Arceſius' heir,
 Alone Ulyſſes drew the vital air,
 And I alone the bed connubial grac'd,
 An unbleſs'd offspring of a ſire unbleſs'd!
 Each neighb'ring realm, conducive to our wo,
 Sends forth her peers, and ev'ry peer a foe:
 The court proud Samos and Dulichium fills,
 And lofty Zacynth crown'd with ſhady hills.
 Ev'n Ithaca and all her lords invade
 Th' imperial ſceptre, and the regal bed:
 The queen averſe to love, yet aw'd by pow'r,
 Seems half to yield, yet flies the bridal hour:
 Meantime their licence uncontroll'd I bear;
 Ev'n now they envy me the vital air:
 But heav'n will ſure revenge, and gods there are,

But go, Eumæus! to the queen impart
 Our ſafe return, and eaſe a mother's heart.
 Yet ſecret go; for num'rous are my foes,
 And here at leaſt I may in peace reſoſe.

To whom the ſwain: I hear, and I obey:
 But old Laertes weeps his life away,
 And deems thee loſt: Shall I my ſpeed employ
 To bleſs his age, a meſſenger of joy?
 The mournful hour that tore his ſon away,
 Sent the ſad ſire in ſolitude to ſtray;
 Yet buſied with his ſlaves, to eaſe his wo,
 He drefs'd the vine, and bade the garden blow,
 Nor food nor wine refus'd: But ſince the day
 That you to Pylos plough'd the wat'ry way,
 Nor wine nor food he taſtes; but, ſunk in woes,
 Wild ſprings the vine, no more the garden blows:

Shut from the walks of men, to pleasure lost,
Pensive and pale, he wanders, half a ghost.

Wretched old man! (with tears the prince returns),
Yet cease to go—what man so blest'd but mourns?
Were ev'ry wish indulg'd by fav'ring skies,
This hour should give Ulysses to my eyes:
But to the queen with speed dispatchful bear
Our safe return, and back with speed repair:
And let some handmaid of her train resort
To good Laertes in his rural court.

While yet he spoke, impatient of delay,
He brac'd his sandals on, and strode away.
Then from the heav'ns the martial goddess flies
Through the wide fields of air, and cleaves the skies;
In form a virgin, in soft beauty's bloom,
Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.
Alone to Ithacus she stood display'd,
But unapparent as a viewless shade
Escap'd Telemachus: (The pow'rs above,
Seen or unseen, o'er earth at pleasure move).
The dogs intelligent confess the tread
Of pow'r divine, and howling, trembling fled.
The goddess beck'ning, waves her deathless hands;
Dauntless the king before the goddess stands.

Then why (she said) O favour'd of the skies!
Why to thy godlike son this long disguise?
Stand forth reveal'd: With him thy cares employ
Against thy foes; be valiant, and destroy!
Lo I descend in that avenging hour,
To combat by thy side, thy guardian pow'r.

She said, and o'er him waves her wand of gold:
Imperial robes his manly limbs infold;

At once with grace divine his frame improves ;
 At once with majesty enlarg'd he moves :
 Youth flush'd his redd'ning cheek, and from his brows
 A length of hair in fable ringlets flows ;
 His black'ning chin receives a deeper shade :
 Then from his eyes upsprung the warrior-maid.

The hero re-ascends : The prince o'eraw'd
 Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a god.
 Then with surprise (surprise chastis'd by fears)
 How art thou chang'd ! (he cry'd), a god appears !
 Far other vests thy limbs majestic grace !
 Far other glories lighten from thy face !
 If heav'n be thy abode, with pious care
 Lo ! I the ready sacrifice prepare ;
 Lo ! gifts of labour'd gold adorn thy shrine,
 To win thy grace : O save us, pow'r divine !

Few are my days, Ulysses made reply,
 Nor I, alas ! descendent of the sky.
 I am thy father. O my son ! my son !
 That father, for whose sake thy days have run
 One scene of wo ; to endless cares consign'd,
 And outrag'd by the wrongs of base mankind.

Then rushing to his arms, he kiss'd his boy
 With the strong raptures of a parent's joy.
 Tears bathe his cheek, and tears the ground bedew :
 He strain'd him close, as to his breast he grew.
 Ah me ! (exclaims the prince with fond desire),
 Thou art not—no, thou canst not be my sire ;
 Heav'n such illusion only can impose,
 By the false joy to aggravate my woes.
 Who but a god can change the gen'ral doom,
 And give to wither'd age a youthful bloom ?

Late, worn with years, in weeds obscene you trod ;
Now, cloth'd in majesty, you move a god.

Forbear, he cry'd ; for heav'n reserve that name ;
Give to thy father but a father's claim :
Other Ulysses shalt thou never see ;
I am Ulysses, I (my son) am he.

Twice ten sad years o'er earth and ocean tost,
'Tis giv'n at length to view my native coast.

Pallas, unconquer'd maid, my frame furrounds
With grace divine ; her pow'r admits no bounds :

She o'er my limbs old age and wrinkles shed ;
Now strong as youth, magnificent I tread.

The gods with ease frail man depress or raise,
Exalt the lowly, or the proud debase.

He spoke and sat. The prince with transport flew,
Hung round his neck, while tears his cheek bedew ;
Nor less the father pour'd a social flood !

They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.

As the bold eagle with fierce sorrow stung,

Or parent-vulture, mourns her ravish'd young ;

They cry, they scream, their unfledg'd brood a prey

To some rude churl, and borne by stealth away ;

So they aloud : And tears in tides had run,

Their grief unfinish'd with the setting sun :

But checking the full torrent in its flow,

The prince thus interrupts the solemn wo.

What ship transported thee, O father, say ?

And what bless'd hands have oar'd thee on the way ?

All, all, (Ulysses instant made reply),

I tell thee all, my child, my only joy ;

Phaeacians bore me to the port assign'd,

A nation ever to the stranger kind ;

Wrapt in th' embrace of sleep, the faithful train

O'er seas convey'd me to my native reign :

Embroider'd vestures, gold, and brass are laid

Conceal'd in caverns in the sylvan shade.

Hither, intent the rival rout to slay,

And plan the scene of death, I bend my way :

So Pallas wills—But thou, my son, explain

The names and numbers of th' audacious train ;

'Tis mine to judge if better to employ

Assistant force, or singly to destroy.

O'er earth (returns the prince) resounds thy name,

Thy well-try'd wisdom, and thy martial fame :

Yet at thy words I start, in wonder lost ;

Can we engage, not decads, but an host ?

Can we alone in furious battle stand

Against that num'rous and determin'd band ?

Hear then their numbers : From Dulichium came

Twice twenty-six, all peers of mighty name ;

Six are their menial train : Twice twelve the boast

Of Samos : Twenty from Zacynthus coast :

And twelve our country's pride ; to these belong

Medon and Phemius skill'd in heav'nly song.

Two sew'rs from day to day the revels wait,

Exact of taste, and serve the feast in state.

With such a foe th' unequal fight to try,

Were by false courage unreveng'd to die.

Then what assistant pow'rs you boast, relate,

Ere yet we mingle in the stern debate.

Mark well my voice, (Ulysses strait replies) :

What need of aids, if favour'd by the skies ;

If shielded to the dreadful fight we move,

By mighty Pallas, and by thund'ring Jove ?

Sufficient they (Telemachus rejoin'd)
 Against the banded pow'rs of all mankind :
 They, high enthron'd above the rolling clouds,
 Wither the strength of man, and awe the gods.

Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in might
 We rise terrific to the task of fight.
 But thou, when morn salutes th' aerial plain,
 The court revisit and the lawless train :
 Me thither in disguise Eumaeus leads,
 An aged mendicant in tatter'd weeds.
 There, if base scorn insult my rev'rend age,
 Bear it, my son ! repress thy rising rage.
 If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel ;
 Bear it, my son ! howe'er thy heart rebel.
 Yet strive by pray'r and counsel to restrain
 Their lawless insults, though thou strive in vain :
 For wicked ears are deaf to wisdom's call,
 And vengeance strikes whom heav'n has doom'd to
 fall.

Once more attend : When * she whose pow'r inspires
 The thinking mind, my soul to vengeance fires,
 I give the sign ; that instant, from beneath,
 Aloft convey the instruments of death,
 Armour and arms ; and, if mistrust arise,
 Thus veil the truth in plausible disguise.

“ These glitt'ring weapons, ere he sail'd to Troy,
 “ Ulysses view'd with stern heroic joy ;
 “ Then beaming o'er th' illumin'd wall they shone :
 “ Now dust dishonours, all their lustre gone.

* Minerva.

" I bear them hence (so Jove my soul inspires)

" From the pollution of the fuming fires ;

" Lest when the bowl inflames, in vengeful mood

" Ye rush to arms, and stain the feast with blood :

" Oft ready swords in luckless hour incite

" The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight."

Such be the plea, and by the plea deceive :

For Jove infatuates all, and all believe.

Yet leave for each of us a sword to wield,

A pointed jav'lin, and a fenceful shield.

But, by my blood that in thy bosom glows,

By that regard a son his father owes,

The secret, that thy father lives, retain

Lock'd in thy bosom from the household train ;

Hide it from all ; ev'n from Eumaeus hide,

From my dear father, and my dearer bride.

One care remains, to note the loyal few

Whose faith yet lasts among the menial crew ;

And noting, ere we rise in vengeance, prove

Who loves his prince ; for sure you merit love.

To whom the youth : To emulate I aim

The brave and wise, and my great father's fame.

But reconsider, since the wisest err,

Vengeance resolv'd, 'tis dang'rous to defer.

What length of time must we consume in vain,

Too curious to explore the menial train ?

While the proud foes, industrious to destroy

Thy wealth in riot, the delay enjoy.

Suffice it in this exigence alone

To mark the damsels that attend the throne :

Dispers'd the youth resides ; their faith to prove

Jove grants henceforth, if thou hast spoke from Jove.

While in debate they waste the hours away,
 Th' associates of the prince repass'd the bay;
 With speed they guide the vessel to the shores;
 With speed debarking land the naval stores;
 Then faithful to their charge, to Clytius bear,
 And trust the presents to his friendly care.
 Swift to the queen a herald flies t' impart
 Her son's return, and ease a parent's heart;
 Lest a sad prey to ever-musing cares,
 Pale grief destroy what time a while forbears.

Th' uncautious herald with impatience burns,
 And cries aloud, Thy son, oh queen, returns.
 Eumaeus sage approach'd th' imperial throne,
 And breath'd his mandate to her ear alone,
 Then measur'd back the way.—The suitor-band
 Stung to the soul, abash'd, confounded stand;
 And issuing from the dome, before the gate,
 With clouded looks, a pale assembly sat.

At length Eurymachus: Our hopes are vain;
 Telemachus in triumph sails the main.
 Haste, rear the mast, the swelling shroud display;
 Haste, to our ambush'd friends the news convey!

Scarce had he spoke, when turning to the strand
 Amphinomus survey'd th' associate band;
 Full to the bay within the winding shores
 With gather'd sails they stood, and lifted oars.
 O friends! he cry'd, elate with rising joy,
 See to the port secure the vessel fly!
 Some god has told them, or themselves survey
 The bark escap'd; and measure back their way.

Swift at the word descending to the shores,
 They moor the vessel and unlade the stores:

Then moving from the strand, apart they sat,
And full and frequent, form'd a dire debate.

Lives then the boy ? he lives, (Antinous cries),
The care of gods, and fav'rite of the skies.

All night we watch'd, till with her orient wheels
Aurora flam'd above the eastern hills,

And from the lofty brow of rocks by day
Took in the ocean with a broad survey :

Yet safe he fails ! the pow'rs coelestial give
To shun the hidden snares of death, and live.

But die he shall, and thus condemn'd to bleed,
Be now the scene of instant death decreed :

Hope ye success ? undaunted crush the foe.

Is he not wise ? know this, and strike the blow.

Wait ye, till he to arms in council draws

The Greeks, averse too justly to our cause ?

Strike, ere, the states conven'd, the foe betray

Our murd'rous ambush on the wat'ry way.

Or chuse ye vagrant from their rage to fly

Outcasts of earth, to breathe an unknown sky ?

The brave prevent misfortune ; then be brave,

And bury future danger in his grave.

Returns he ? ambush'd we'll his walk invade,

Or where he hides in solitude and shade :

And give the palace to the queen a dow'r,

Or him she blesses in the bridal hour.

But if submissive you resign the sway,

Slaves to a boy ; go, flatter and obey.

Retire we instant to our native reign,

Nor be the wealth of kings consum'd in vain.

Then wed whom choice approves : The queen be
giv'n

To some blest prince, the prince decreed by heav'n.

Abash'd, the suitor-train his voice attends ;

Till from his throne Amphinomus descends,

Who o'er Dulichium stretch'd his spacious reign,

A land of plenty, blest with ev'ry grain :

Chief of the numbers who the queen address,

And though displeasing, yet displeasing least.

Soft were his words ; his actions wisdom sway'd ;

Graceful a while he paus'd, then mildly said.

O friends, forbear ! and be the thought withstood :

'Tis horrible to shed imperial blood !

Consult we first th' all-seeing pow'rs above,

And the sure oracles of righteous Jove.

If they assent, ev'n by this hand he dies ;

If they forbid, I war not with the skies.

He said : The rival train his voice approv'd,

And rising instant to the palace mov'd.

Arriv'd, with wild tumultuous noise they sat,

Recumbent on the shining thrones of state.

Then Medon, conscious of their dire debates,

The murd'rous council to the queen relates.

Touch'd at the dreadful story she descends :

Her hasty steps a damsel-train attends.

Full where the dome its shining valves expands,

Sudden before the rival pow'rs she stands :

And veiling decent with a modest shade

Her cheek, indignant to Antinous said :

O void of faith ! of all bad men the worst !

Renown'd for wisdom, but by th' abuse accurst !

Mistaking fame proclaims thy gen'rous mind !
 Thy deeds denote thee of the basest kind.
 Wretch ! to destroy a prince that friendship gives,
 While in his guest his murd'rer he receives :
 Nor dread superior Jove, to whom belong
 The cause of suppliants, and revenge of wrong.
 Hast thou forgot, (ungrateful as thou art),
 Who sav'd thy father with a friendly part ?
 Lawless he ravag'd with his martial pow'rs
 The Taphian pirates on Thesprotia's shores ;
 Enrag'd, his life, his treasures they demand ;
 Ulysses sav'd him from th' avenger's hand.
 And wouldst thou evil for his good repay ?
 His bed dishonour, and his house betray ?
 Afflict his queen ? and with a murd'rous hand
 Destroy his heir ?——but cease, 'tis I command.

Far hence those fears, (Eurymachus reply'd),
 O prudent princess ! bid thy soul confide.
 Breathes there a man who dares that hero slay,
 While I behold the golden light of day ?
 No : By the righteous pow'rs of heav'n I swear,
 His blood in vengeance smokes upon my spear.
 Ulysses, when my infant days I led,
 With wine suffic'd me, and with dainties fed :
 My gen'rous soul abhors th' ungrateful part,
 And my friend's son lives dearest to my heart.
 Then fear no mortal arm : If heav'n destroy
 We must resign ; for man is born to die.

Thus smooth he ended, yet his death conspir'd :
 Then forrowing, with sad step the queen retir'd,
 With streaming eyes all comfortless deplor'd,
 Touch'd with the dear remembrance of her lord ;

Nor ceas'd, till Pallas bid her sorrows fly,
And in soft slumber seal'd her flowing eye.

And now Eumæus, at the ev'ning-hour,
Came late returning to his sylvan bow'r.
Ulysses and his son had dress'd with art
A yearling boar, and gave the gods their part,
Holy repast ! That instant from the skies
The martial goddess to Ulysses flies :
She waves her golden wand, and reassumes
From ev'ry feature ev'ry grace that blooms ;
At once his vestures change ; at once she sheds
Age o'er his limbs, that tremble as he treads ;
Lest to the queen the swain with transport fly,
Unable to contain th' unruly joy.

When near he drew, the prince breaks forth ; Pro-
claim

What tidings, friend ! what speaks the voice of fame ?
Say, if the suitors measure back the main,
Or still in ambush thirst for blood in vain ?

Whether (he cries) they measure back the flood,
Or still in ambush thirst in vain for blood,
Escap'd my care : Where lawless suitors sway,
Thy mandate born, my soul disdain'd to stay.
But from th' Hermaean height I cast a view,
Where to the port a bark high bounding flew :
Her freight a shining band ; with martial air
Each pois'd his shield, and each advanc'd his spear :
And if aright these searching eyes survey,
Th' eluded suitors stem the wat'ry way.

The prince, well pleas'd to disappoint their wiles,
Steals on his fire a glance, and secret smiles.

And now a short repast prepar'd, they fed,
Till the keen rage of craving hunger fled :
Then to repose withdrawn, apart they lay,
And in soft sleep forgot the cares of day.

THE END OF VOLUME NINTH.



Homerus, ca. v8. Jh.

The Odyssey of Homer

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